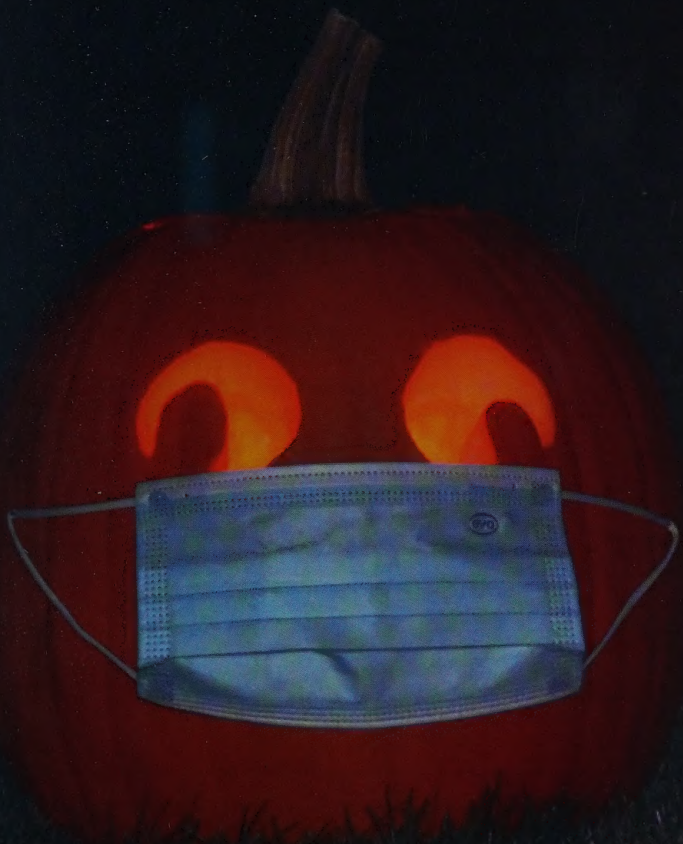
Spartana

Issue 3 | October 2020



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Dear Reader,

In just a few days it will be the greatest day of the year: Halloween. I may be a bit biased because my birthday is the day before Halloween, but what isn't there to love about pumpkin food, black cats and candy.

This Halloween, I challenge everyone to make the most of difficult times. Instead of trick-or-treating, have a Zoom movie night or bake some Halloween treats. Whatever you choose to do, just make sure you are having fun, but also stay safe.

Hopefully, this Spartana will be your guide to Halloween and enjoying fall. In this issue, we have included a story covering the best pumpkin foods, as well as an overview of everyone's favorite candy, Twix. Additionally, my personal wish is that this issue of the Spartana will be more than a guide to Halloween, but also a guide to politics and Fort Wayne. Check out letters from our school board candidates and information on the presidential candidates. Also, make sure to see page 10 to learn about the Trader Joe's opening in Fort Wayne. I am so excited for you to read and see what we have been working on this past month.

As always, please feel free to contact us with any of your questions. Also, check out our website, www.hhsspartana.com for more stories and information.

Happy Reading!
Mikayla Havison
Editor-in-Chief

Meet the Staff

written by
JULIA EPLING
designed by Julia Epling

The 2020 Spartana staff is looking forward to Halloween this year!

Elyssa Huff

Elyssa usually spends her Halloween reading and eating bags of candy from Dollar General. She dressed up as a vampire three years in a row. Elyssa's favorite Halloween activity is watching scary movies and her favorite is Nightmare on Elm Street. Her favorite candy is Kit-Kat and song is Monster Mash.

Julia Epling

Julia used to go trick-or-treating with her friends and sister. Now she usually spends her Halloween hanging out with friends or passing out candy. Her most memorable costume was dressing up as ketchup and mustard with a friend in fifth grade. Julia's favorite Halloween movie is The Nightmare Before Christmas and song is Thriller. This year, Julia plans on dressing up with friends for a Halloween party.

Ganga Subramanian

Ganga's favorite Halloween activity is hanging out with friends and handing out candy. She used go trick-or-treating and her most memorable costume is a witch. Her favorite movie is Nightmare Before Christmas and favorite song is Thriller.

Jake Houser

"My house is pretty far out from our neighbors, so instead of waiting to give candy I just set a bucket out on the porch and watch football or hang out with friends instead," Jake Houser (11), said. Jake used to go trick-or-treating with friends, but stopped about seventh grade. His most memorable costume was Darth Maul. Jake's favorite candies are Mike & Ikes, Sweedish Fish and Reese's and movie is Scary Movie.

GET TO KNOW US

Mikayla Havison

Mikayla usually spends her Halloween passing out candy and doing some homework. Her birthday is October 30, so she would have a Halloween birthday party and go trick-or-treating with friends. Halloween is Mikayla's holiday partially because of her birthday, but mostly because of the cute elements of it, like black cats. Her favorite candy is York, and favorite movie is Hocus Pocus.

June Hill

"(I used to spend my Halloween) out on the streets with a stupid jacket covering my epic vampire Dorothy costume," June (12) said. Halloween is June's favorite holiday because her birthday is November 1. June's favorite candy are Mini Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. She doesn't like scary movies, so her favorite Halloween activity is carving pumpkins. June's most memorable costume was a chicken.

Emmalyn Meyer

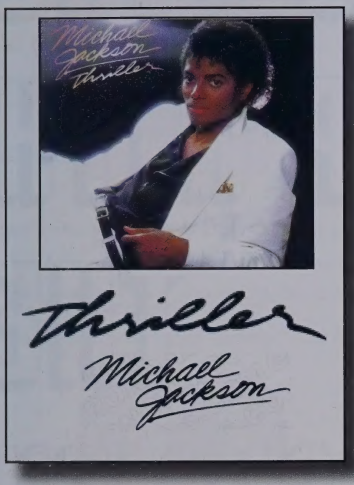
Emmalyn used to go trick-or-treating with her sister or friends. Now she usually eats candy and does homework. One of Emmalyn's more memorable costumes was a bookworm. "I wore a green tracksuit and had a large cardboard Little House on the Prairie on my back," Emmalyn (12) said. Her favorite candies are Three Muskateers and candy corn. Her favorite Halloween movie is It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown.

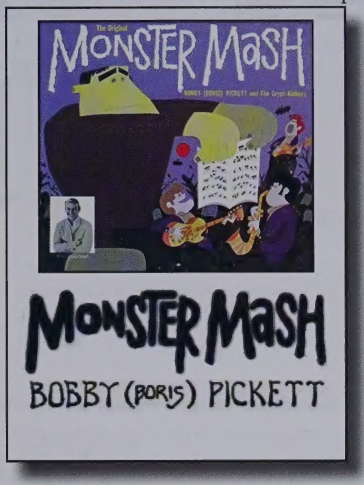
Claire Elliott

Claire's favorite holiday is Halloween because the anticipation, pumpkins, and mystique. She used to go trick-or-treating and drink hot cider with her sister and friend. Now she spends the day with her cat and some friends. Her most elaborate costume has been a free style ninja turtle. Her favorite Halloween movie Hocus Pocus and candies are Twix, Whoppers, and Kit-Kats. Claire isn't sure if she'll dress up, but she might be a cowboy.

OUR TOP TUNES

While there are several popular Halloween songs, these are a few of our favorites. Some honorable mentions include "Calling All the Monsters" by China Anne McClain and "September" by Earth, Wind, & Fire.





GET TO KNOW US (CONT.)

Zoe Erickson

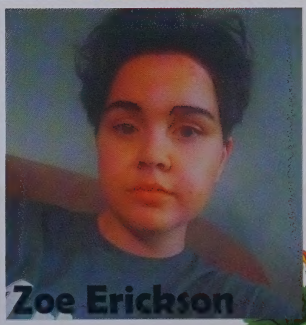
Zoe usually alternates between giving out candy and going trick-or-treating every year. When she was younger she used to only trick-or-treat with friends and would sometimes have a party. Her most memorable costume was a ghost with a mustache. Her favorite candy is 3 Musketeers and song is Calling All the Monsters by China Anne McClain.

Luke Land

"(On Halloween) I usually go to my aunts house downtown with my family on my mom's side and walk with the little kids while they go get candy," Luke Land (10) said. Luke's favorite activity on Halloween is hanging out with friends, but he used to dress up when he was younger. His favorite candy are the Reece's Pumpkin Peanut Butter Cups. His favorite movie is The Nightmare Before Christmas.

Madeline Phuong

Madeline usually spends her Halloween passing out candy to trick-or-treaters. "As a kid, I would go trick-or-treating with my friends, or go to Greenfield Village and trick-or-treat with my family," Madeline Phuong (10) said. Her most elaborate costume was a flower from when she was younger. Her favorite Halloween movies are The Nightmare Before Christmas and Coraline. She enjoys going to haunted houses and her favorite candy is Kit-Kat.

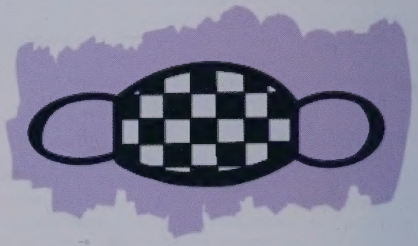


KEEPING UP WITH THE FRESHMEN

written by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN
designed by Ganga Subramanian

As the 2020-2021 school year finishes its first two months on a high note, Homestead's class of 2024 takes their place as our current class of freshmen. Their high school career may have gotten off to a rocky start due to the Covid-19 situation, but they are determined to make the best out of this school year. With new teachers, abundant extracurricular activities, and a constantly growing list of clubs, there is no shortage of what opportunities await the freshmen. The Spartana brings you a closer look at the freshmen class of 2024.

How do you feel about starting high school in the middle of a pandemic?



"It's not the most ideal situation, I feel like nobody would want this. But the big thing I'm glad it was my freshman year rather than my senior year where all the important c lege stuff and big things in your life happen. There's less of a precedent that you have be like, 'whoa this is so different from last year' well, it's gonna be different regardless c if you're a freshman cause high school versus middle is very different." - Emily Adams

"It's honestly not that bad. I prefer high school over middle school since the higher pressure at school makes me not put stuff off to the next day and I actually get work done the day it's due which is more beneficial." - Miguel Guzman

"It's weird since we're new to the school and everything, but we also have to wear masks and socially distance." - Sai Ramani

What are you most looking forward to this year?

"Show choir season. I'm very excited for that." - Emily Adams

"I'm a part of robotics club, and I know that regardless of how the year turns out we'll be able to put something cool together. Concert band is another thing I'm looking forward to." - Elena Matyas

"Dungeons and Dragons club and jazz concerts." - Miguel Guzman

What do you like the most about high school so far?

"I would say the freedom. There's a lot more freedom here than in middle school. You're also more respected here." - Emily Adams

"The thing I like the most about high school is the different classes that I get the choice to take." - Daisy Stout

"I like all the friends that I have in all my classes because they always help me out if I need it." - Andrew Grubbs

What is your favorite class so far this year?

"Lunch. I chose lunch because that is the only thing I look forward to within the day." - Cameron Elder.

"Gym is my favorite class because I can talk more with my classmates and, for me, it is not a hard class to pass. I enjoy the sports we play." - Andrew Grubbs

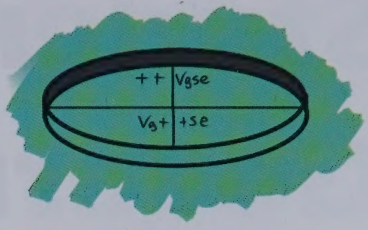
"Biomedical science because we get to learn about a subject that is really interesting while doing fun labs" - Samantha Doherty

What is your least favorite class so far this year?

"AP World because it's harder compared to my other classes." - Elena Matyas

"A tie between English and Biology because I don't find either subject particularly interesting." - Miguel Guzman

"Spanish because I think it's boring." - Sai Ramani



What is your favorite thing to do outside of school?

"My favorite thing to do outside of school is dance." - Daisy Stout

"I like photography" - Cameron Elder

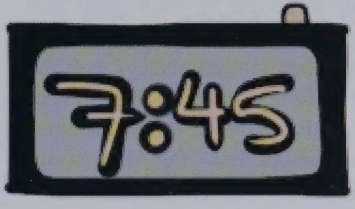
"My favorite thing to do outside of school is to write music." - Sai Ramani

Do you miss anything from middle school, and if you do what is it?

"The only thing I miss about middle school is that I had more time and less homework." - Daisy Stout

"Yes, I miss not having to do hours of homework everyday" - Andrew Grubbs

"The block schedule made it a lot easier to manage homework, that's not too big of a difference though." - Tim Rowan



What opportunities will you look forward to when you become upperclassmen?

"I'm very excited to become an upperclassmen! I'm looking forward to Homecoming, Prom, and having a good group of friends by the time I'm a senior." - Elena Matyas

"I am really looking forward to doing Senior Experience because I think it would be a very good experience." - Samantha Doherty

"The chance to take a lot more interesting classes." - Tim Rowan

What do you think is the hardest part of being in 9th grade right now?

"Dealing with all the covid stuff, so like remembering to bring a mask in the morning and social distancing." - Cameron Elder

"Along with Covid-19, I don't have classes with any of my friends at all. Because I'm taking a lot of classes that are honors, I don't know a lot of the people in them." - Samantha Doherty

"Being able to do everything teachers ask us to do with the precautions of Covid." - Tim Rowan

Reppin' Student Government

written by
LUKE LAND
Designed by Luke Land

Student representatives are a group of people for each grade that give input for the higher up people in student government. I got the chance to talk to a few student representatives and let them talk their minds about how they feel about Student Government.

"Student representative is a position of student government in which representatives advise and give input on ideas thrown around between other representatives and higher positions in the government," said Sydney Holmes, a 10th grade class representative.

Mike Obioma, (9), is a 9th grade representative. He originally wanted to be Class President. "I had never been a part of a student government or council so I wanted to check it out, and take up some sort of leadership role in the student body...," Obioma said. He ended up falling short of the President role, but got chosen to be a representative instead.

Obioma hopes for a great year in student government. "Despite the Covid year we'll hopefully be able to make this year unforgettable with unique events that will set this year apart from the rest," said Obioma.

Sydney Holmes originally ran for sophomore Class President but lost. "Mostly, I was excited to be in a position to make sure students' needs and desires for the school would be heard...," Holmes said. She also wanted her peer's ideas heard as well.

Holmes thinks that this class is a very strong class. "I think that the sophomore class has a very strong group of people representing it, as well as the other classes...," Holmes said. She is very excited for what this year has incoming for Student Government.

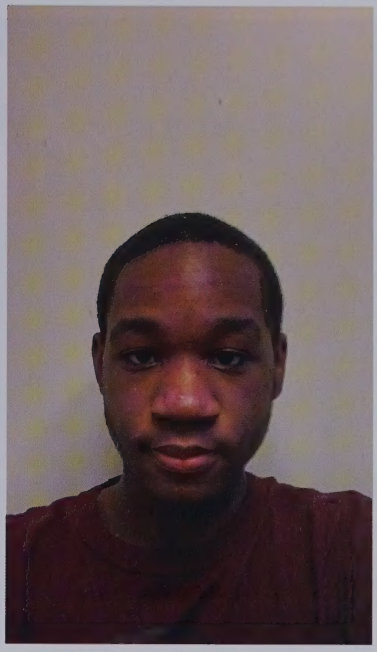
Jenna Lane (11) is new to the whole student government experience. "I've never been in Student Government before, so I don't know exactly what to expect, but I hope that I can help contribute ideas and make decisions to help out the school," Lane said.

Lane originally ran for a position in Student Government but lost. "I ran for class treasurer this year because I thought it would be a fun position to be in, and I was interested in joining student government," Lane said.

The student representatives are looking great for this school year. With some new faces and some coming back this year, the student representatives are going to be a great group this year.

Jenna Lane

Sydney Holmes



Mike Obioma

THE NEW KID IN TOWN

written by
ELYSSA HUFF
designed by June Hill

It's real. It's official. Trader Joe's is coming to Fort Wayne.

What Fort Waynians have desired for a long time (as seen with the Facebook page "Fort Wayne wants a Trader Joe's!") is finally coming to fruition. The chain, millennial-popular grocery store will now have a place in Jefferson Point, around the already famed Panera and Chick-fil-A. It marks a moment in Fort Wayne's growing millennial relevancy, in which more events and opportunities are targeted toward a younger demographic.

The coming of Trader Joe's is set to have resounding effects on the people of Fort Wayne. Students of Homestead are eagerly anticipating its arrival.

"I'm really excited for the new Trader Joe's," Ben Burkle (12) said. "I love Kroger, but it's so expensive, and sometimes it's good to have an alternative grocery store to go to whenever I need soamething special."

While Trader Joe's may be new in Fort Wayne, some students have already had exposure to the store in the past.

"I'm from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, so my family and I have been going since I can remember. We would have to stockpile our Trader Joe's goods from the Indy store and ration them until our next trip," Sophia Barton (12) said. "If I was asked what I wanted most in Fort Wayne, this would be it."

A major part of any store's moving in is its chosen location, and the new Trader Joe's location isn't without controversy. While Jefferson Point is a popular shopping location, especially with younger groups of people, it still has a lot of issues. Even the unobservant shopper may have noticed the slow decline of stores, as more and more leave the mall.

"My grandma used to own a store [at Jefferson Point], so I know a big problem there is the really high rent. Many stores, especially the smaller ones, simply cannot afford to stay there. I think losing another store could really put the mall in jeopardy, like losing Von Maur. I'm hoping Trader Joe's will give the mall the boost it needs and draw more stores in," Barton said.

It's even more significant for it to be in the Southwest side of Fort Wayne, an area that is historically conservative and slow to progress in businesses.

"It's clear that Fort Wayne, specifically Southwest Allen County, is growing more quickly than it once was," Burkle said. "[Trader Joe's] is a huge stepping stone for future growth and opportunity in the area, because

1. Customers wait in line outside of the newly opened storefront.

2. A portrait of Cashew the panda, this location's mascot hangs in the store.

3. A Trader Joe's haul.

4. One of the store's brightly colored displays is eye-catchingly positioned near the entrance.

5. The decor features artwork of some of Fort Wayne's landmarks.

PHOTOS BY JUNE HILL

it means that national chains are taking an interest in Fort Wayne."

With its location in the suburbs, it's sure to have special appeal for families and their children.

It's super fun for kids; they hide a stuffed animal everyday and if you spot it, you get a prize. Every location's animal is different so I'm curious to see what our mascot will be," Barton said.

While grocery stores may be inherently targeted toward an older audience, Trader Joe's seems to be the exception to this rule. In 2018, nearly 20% of its shoppers were between the ages of 18 and 29. While this may seem like a small share, this is significantly larger than the age ranges of other grocery stores. With its low-priced, typically healthy products, this can come as no surprise.

"I think it will be more popular with younger audiences, because it has really well-sourced food for low prices. It's easy to shop, and a lot of their foods are more popular with millennials," Barton said.

In 2020, expectations for the incoming store are high. However, students are hopeful that Trader Joe's will be able to fulfill them and thrive in its new location.

"I used to always go on the website and put in a request for a Trader Joe's in our city," Barton said. "I really think it will thrive here with its great prices and easy shopability. I know that I'll definitely be going there pretty often."

It may seem ridiculous, but perhaps the arrival of Trader Joe's could be a true diamond for Fort Wayne and its economy.

"I'm so excited for it to come, but I'm also sad that I'll be moving in a year and will not be able to enjoy it for longer," Barton said. "I can't wait for others to be able to discover the little gem I've been going to all my life."

PHOTO FROM KATIESBLISS.COM

NOT YOUR BASIC PSL...

written and designed by
MIKAYLA HAVISON

The essence of pumpkin is essential to fall. Unfortunately, pumpkin flavor get a less than desirable reputation because of the *pumpkin spice latte,* but believe it or not, there are alternative ways to get your pumpkin in this season. So spice up your life and try these pumpkin products before it is too late.

1. PUMPKIN SPICE YOGURT

For pumpkin without the heaping of sugar, look to Chobani's Pumpkin Spice Greek Yogurt. With pumpkin puree, cinnamon and nutmeg, Chobani's yogurt hits all the high notes of fall, and can be a great addition to any breakfast or lunch (maybe even dessert). A 4-pack of the product is available at Walmart for $3.96, but it can also be found at The Fresh Market and Kroger.

2. PUMPKIN SODA

This sounds disgusting, but Rocket Fizz's (located at Jefferson Pointe) pumpkin soda is actually not bad. It is sweet, caffeine-free and in my opinion, an overall win. It is probably not something most people would want to consume every day, but it is a fun experience to have. While you are there, you can also check out their other wacky soda flavors and maybe grab some pumpkin taffy to snack on between sips.

3. PUMPKIN PIE POP-TART

The cardboard texture and artificial fillings of Pop-Tarts often leave a lot to be desired; however, the Frosted Pumpkin Pie flavor can hardly be called a Pop-Tart. The pumpkin pie filling paired with sugary frosting makes the perfect combination, and when you pop it in the toaster, magic happens. For people who crave pumpkin pie, but do not want the hassle of making it, the Frosted Pumpkin Pie Pop Tart is a dream come true. These pockets of paradise are available for purchase at Target for $2.99 in a 12-pack, but they can also be found at Walmart.

3. PUMPKIN DONUT

If you are tired of waiting in line at Dunkin' Donuts just to find out they are out of pumpkin donuts, then look no further than The Fresh Market. Half-a-dozen of pumpkin donuts are available for purchase for $3.99. They are just as delicious, less expensive and actually available most of the time. Not to mention, you can buy them the night before, so you do not have to wake up before 6:00 am to beat the lines.

5. PUMPKIN CHAI

For people who do not like coffee or are looking to change up their Starbucks order, try ordering an iced chai latte and adding pumpkin sauce. If the mood is extra fancy, add a layer of cold cream and pumpkin spice topping. It is truly delectable and tastes like liquefied pumpkin pie. Hopefully if enough people order, this item can move off the secret menu, so people with pumpkin-cravings feel like less of a nuisance when they order.

THE ART OF DIVERSITY

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

"Right now, there's a lot of frustration in our community that we wouldn't be experiencing in better times," Mayor Tom Henry said. "The culture and arts are something of great power in Fort Wayne, and something that we've been working very hard to offer in our community to take away people's angst for just a short period of time."

In our current world of uncertainty and unrest, it's easy to feel divided and isolated. For Three Rivers Art Center for Kids (TRACK) founder Terry Doran, however, the present turmoil is a new opportunity for bridging our differences. It was with this goal that Doran founded the RiverDrums Festival five years ago. Each year, RiverDrums showcases the passions and talents of a diverse group of Fort Wayne artists and entertainers.

Doran first started TRACK to transform the lives of abused and marginalized children through the power of music, dance and writing. Doran himself has produced plays and short documentaries such as "Anne Frank and the River Traveler," "Happy New Year Molly," "Dreams for Kori" and "Angel Fire." While filming his "Anne Frank and the River Traveler" documentary in 2014, Doran took a river trip and was impressed by his fellow travelers' deep appreciation of the river.

After witnessing a moving performance on Native American heritage by a Miami tribe member in 2015, Doran was inspired to create RiverDrums, an event where people from all walks of life could experience diverse heritage and cultural art. In Doran's words,

"art shouldn't be just for the elite, but a treasure to be shared."

The first RiverDrums Festival was held on the Wells Bridge in 2016. Most recently, TRACK hosted the fifth annual RiverDrums Festival at the Riverfront Promenade Park in Fort Wayne. Nearly 300 people attended.

The RiverDrums Festival is supported and organized by Friends of the Third World, City of Fort Wayne's Cable Fund Access Board, and individuals like Patty Hunter, host of the "Patty's Page" talk show. Now more than ever, the spirit of RiverDrums lies in community.

"We're trying to let people know that they're not alone,"

Hunter said.

"I am really humbled by the talented people that help me make RiverDrums happen," Doran said. "All the performers felt that they were helping people to cope with the strain and anxiety of living in such uncertainty."

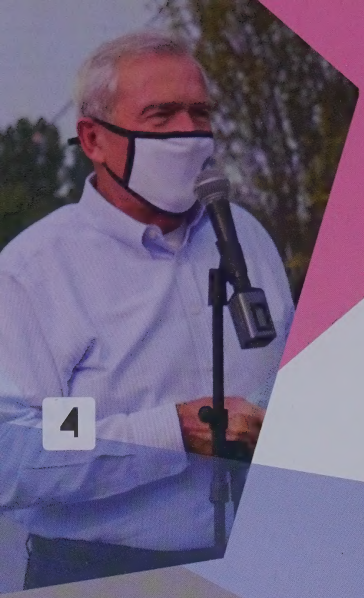
The festivities commenced with a proclamation written by Doran and delivered by Mayor Henry: September 14, 2020 is officially RiverDrums Day, in honor of the late "Miss Virginia" Schrantz whose "life serves as a legacy of hope."

"What do Miss Virginia and RiverDrums have in common? RiverDrums is about helping others, especially during this pandemic, and nobody exemplifies that more than Miss Virginia," Doran said during the event.

When not working as a nurse, Miss Virginia helped those in need at her home and at her food pantry on South Hanna Street. She was given Washington D.C.'s National Humanitarian Award for her efforts. With Mayor Henry's decree, the exemplary social work of Miss Virginia and the cultural bridging of RiverDrums were permanently recorded in Fort Wayne history.

"Proclamations are extremely important because they recognize someone who has made Fort Wayne a better place to live," Mayor Henry said. "Proclamations are actually entered into the (history of the) city of Fort Wayne, so when someone or some group researches our city's history, they'll understand why today was so important."

RiverDrums was highly commended by Mayor Henry for "the diversity that it shares among our city as far as being open to anyone and everyone,



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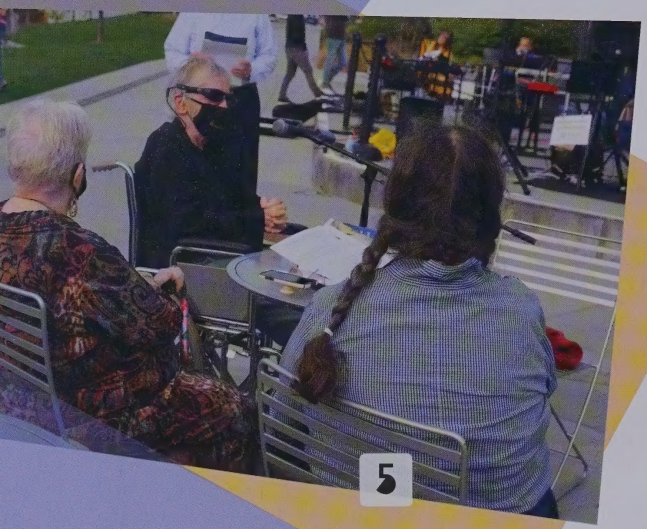
"RiverDrums showcases that we are all one people by highlighting the beauty of different cultures through art, the universal language of humanity."



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and also the quality of life that it adds to our community."

Performances included a reenactment of a French fur trader's accounts, traditional music by Native American flutists Ginger Karns and Ken Noland, and appearances by Middle Eastern dancer Lauren Conklin, drummer Adam Riviere, and Hispanic dance group Amaneceres de México.

"Only at RiverDrums will a mayor and a French fur trader be on the same stage," Doran joked in introducing the fur trader, who welcomed the audience to Kekionga, the name of Fort Wayne's original settlement.

Over the past decade, flutists Karns and Noland, have performed for the National Public Radio (NPR), Fort Wayne Access TV, and the National Guard.

"A lot of people don't know the cultures and traditions of the Indians, and I think it is vital for everyone to understand where they came from and what happened to them since they were here first," Karns said.

In addition to performing on NPR and Fort Wayne Access TV's "Potpourri" hosted by John Dickmeyer, Karns does school tours in Huntington, Indiana at the forks of the Wabash River. She teaches Huntington students on how to play the different types of flutes. One of her most memorable moments was when a fourth grader requested the Star Wars theme song on flute. With these performances and tours, Karns aspires to create a peaceful and welcoming space.

"(The flute is) very meditative and very soothing, and in these stressful times it really helps to relieve the stress," Karns said.

While Karns became interested in the flute at a young age through Native American powwows, Noland began playing the flute eight years ago.

"I found my soul, my heart, and my reason in the flute," Noland said. "After I started (playing the flute) people sent me messages and letters about what the flute does for them, and I knew that's what I was doing for the rest of my life."

Noland's most memorable performance was for the National Guard, when the National Guard General expressed his utmost appreciation for Noland's music. Nolands noted that the General admitted to liking Noland's music better than the National Guard band.

"(I want to create) unity in people and in art. It bridges differences in languages and cultures to bring people together," Noland said.

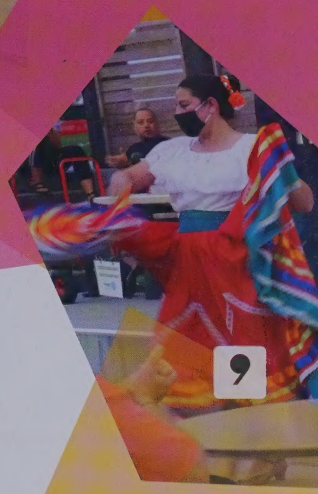
Noland's desire to bridge differences was reflected in the Hispanic dance group, Amaneceres de México, which was established over two decades ago. Lead dancer Margarita danced as a child in Mexico, and began leading the group about 22 years ago.

"(It is important to share Mexican culture in Fort Wayne) because we have a large Hispanic community here and it's good to keep our traditions alive - our language and our music," Margarita said.

All those who organized, supported, and attended RiverDrums were bridged not only by an appreciation of cultural diversity but also by the ultimate goal of unity, which is achieved only by an acceptance and understanding of such differences.

"(RiverDrums) showcases that we are all one people by highlighting the beauty of different cultures through art, the universal language of humanity," Doran said. "I believe appreciating beauty will ease the fear that leads to hate and violence."

8



9

1. Native American flutist Ginger Karns
2. Mayor Tom Henry speaking with journalist Madeline Phuong
3. Cherokee flutist Ken Noland
4. Mayor Tom Henry delivering the RiverDrums Day proclamation
5. RiverDrums Festival organizers, Terry Doran and Patty Hunter
6. Impersonator of a French fur trader's welcome to Kekionga
7. Middle Eastern dancer Lauren Conklin and drummer Adam Riviere
8. Dancers with Amaneceres de México
9. Lead dancer Margarita with Amaneceres de México

PHOTOS BY MADELINE PHUONG

How to Build a Pandemic Time Capsule

written and designed by
JUNE HILL

As unthinkable as it sounds there may come a day where you want to look back on 2020 and remember what you were thinking, feeling, and doing. By putting together a time capsule you will be able to reflect on the good and the bad of this crazy year far in the future. Hopefully with a bit of humor.

You might need:
- Paint
- Glue
- Scissors
- Tape
- Markers or colored pencils
- Tissue paper

1

Choose a jar, box, or other container to store your items inside.

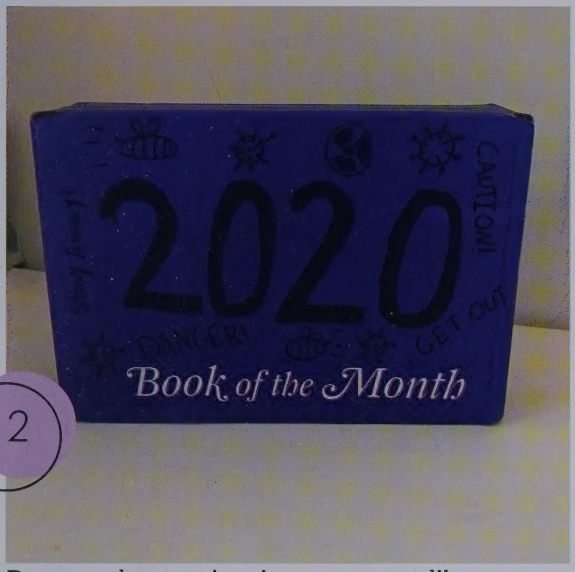
4

Compile plenty of photos, either on a flash drive or printed out, of things you want to remember.

5

Write a letter to your future self. What has changed because of COVID-19? What do you hope your life looks like in the future?

Because maybe you will want to remember all this craziness one day.



2

Decorate the container in any way you like.

3

Think about everything that happened, happy or sad, and choose items that reflect those moments.

6

Tuck everything safely in the container and seal it shut. You might want to pack it with tissue paper to keep things from breaking.

7

Write the date that you plan to reopen the time capsule on the outside, Maybe add the event in your phone calendar.

The Twix Question

Velvety chocolate, chewy caramel and pyschological dilemmas

written and designed by
Claire Elliott

The only successful psychologists are the ones in marketing. Like a falcon following the vast, forking trails from above, marketeers pinpoint the consumer's various trains of thought to create corresponding advertisements.

Particularly, the Twix team, from Mars Co., is brilliant in their campaigning. The creation of "Right" and "Left" twix opens a door of controversy among the candy community. Certain pugnacious individuals argue that there is no manufactured difference between the two options.

The difference, however, lies in the choice.

Left or Right?

Like many "instant" decisions, the Twix question involves the deep unconscious. The renowned psychologist Freud was the first to theorize about these repressed thoughts and their underlying influence.

"Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate," said Carl Gustav Jung. Thus, the fate and chance simply dissolve into constructs of our imagination.

But first, reader, let me ask you this: Left or Right? Or, right or left?

As we are all Westerners, we read and write from left to right. Even in pictures, our minds first comprehend the left-most figure.

Other languages, such as Manderin, read right to left, and thus have a different subconscious path.

Furthermore, as we read left to right, our timelines are also formed left or right. Thus, left symbolizes backwards, while right becomes the forward. Depending on the age of the chooser, one may be searching for "the good old days," or yearning for the future.

Or, one might choose right, for the powerful role it plays in our lives. As the majority of the population is right-handed, it has an ever-pervading dominance.

Moreover, the connotation of "right" is associated with correctness, justice, and truth. On the other hand, left is associated with evil. In fact, the Latin word "sinister," means left.

Right's majority, though, does not always come in handy for its popularity. The 2000s to 2010s are flooded with media stressing "quirkiness." For example, the Taylor Swift song "You Belong With Me" repeatedly degrades conformity. Any Netflix Original movie in the last three years, such as The Kissing Booth, also implies that "uniqueness" is the highest pedestal one can be raised to. So, to reject the society's norms, one may be enticed to choose left.

Guys, too, are surrounded by these themes. The number of underdog sports films is innumerable.

Although simple directions, Left and Right play divisive roles in our society: politics. The Left with the Democrats and Right with the Republicans. Affiliation of one, or hatred towards the other, could pull an individual into a certain direction...of twix.

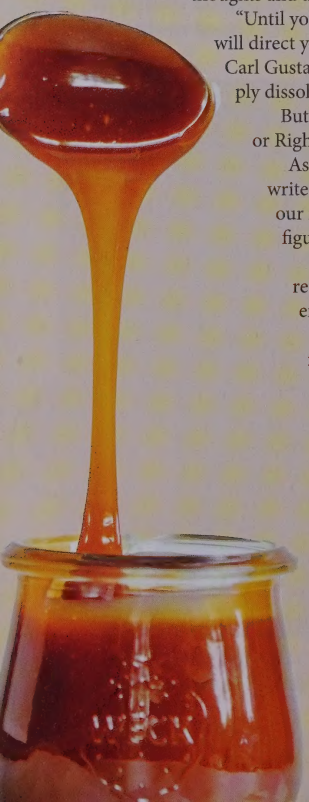
Another possible explanation for these "meaningless" decisions is the visual demonstrations of each word. Left, composed of four letters, is short and unbalanced. Right, on the other hand, has an influential fifth letter, making the word even and clean. The lower pull of the "g," too, balances the height of the "h" and "t."

Beyond these caves, flowing streams are the instant decisions. The placement of the twix bars can alter said choices. For instance, if the right twix is placed first, at the left. Depending on how dominant the individual's visual analysis is, this could counteract the other influences.

When testing my journalist peers, I hid both twix bars in the pockets of my cardigan. I deliberately phrased my question, "Left or Right."

The results were rather intriguing. Five for left, six for right. A near split. However, this is a short experiment, and therefore inconclusive.

Nevertheless, the Twix Dilemma is just one demonstration of the way our lives are shaped. Because there is no manufactured difference between Left and Right twix, this situation allows for a clearer analysis of decision. Still, as the various influences of media, culture, and etc, intersect, it becomes near impossible to decipher how a choice is made.



Left or Right?

LGBTQIA+ History Classes

written by
Zoe Erickson
designed by Zoe Erickson

Should LGBTQ+ history be taught in schools nationwide? The answer, obviously, is yes. If you are a member of the LGBTQ+ community, you will most likely agree with me. If you are not, I can't be sure where you stand on the matter but hopefully I've gotten your attention. So why should the history of this particular community be taught in schools? Well, it's simple really. It's the same reason we teach the history of the black community, as well as the history of women's rights. Because these are all people who deserve to be talked about.

Around the middle of the 20th century, the LGBTQ+ community slowly began to emerge from its hiding place in history. Of course, they've always been around, but they haven't always been accepted, or appreciated. Oftentimes, they also lacked proper labels for their different orientations, so it might be harder to spot them in history, but they're there. Take the ancient civilizations, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Egypt. Here, polyamory (the practice of engaging in multiple sexual relationships with the consent of all the people involved) was standard. And, "Sexuality in ancient Egypt was considered just another aspect of life on earth" (Ancient History Encyclopedia). In other words, no one cared what your sexual preference was.

Now today, that concept might be somewhat difficult for most to wrap their heads around. But that's okay, because all that really needs to be understood is the LGBTQ+ community has always existed, and their identities are valid. So why aren't things like polyamory prominent in our culture? That has a lot to do with religion. "Intolerance toward homosexual behaviour grew particularly in the Middle Ages, especially among the adherents of Christianity and Islam" (Briticanna). Of course, it was not only those two. "Most religious views on human sexuality are guided by sacred texts, which contain diverse ideas, and sometimes rules, about the role sexuality plays in our world" (CSUN Oviatt Library). These "rules" define homosexuality and the like as "unnatural". Which is completely untrue. Being gay or transgender or asexual is merely the result of small difference in biological structure. "The discovery that a nucleus differs in size between heterosexual and homosexual men illustrates that sexual orientation in humans is amenable to study at the biological structure. "The discovery that a nucleus differs in size between heterosexual and homosexual men illustrates that sexual orientation in humans is amenable to study at the biological level" (The Atlantic). It's seen all the time, variations in chromosomes, human brains, nucleus sizes, etc. I mean, every single body is different, no two are perfectly alike. So the concept of a different sexual orientation should not be difficult to understand.

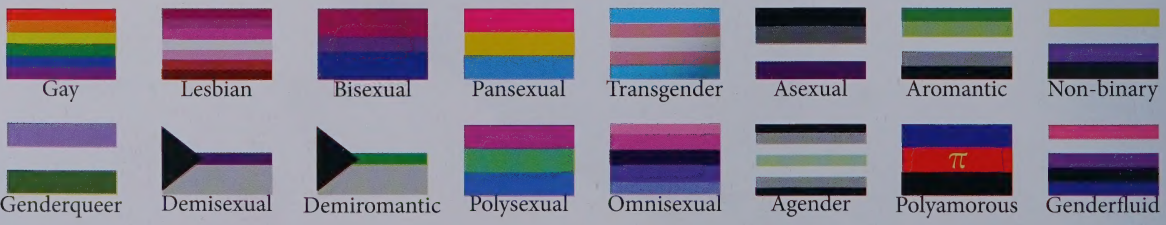
Some people may argue while reading this that "well, learning about that kind of history would make me uncomfortable because I'm not gay". I can't change the way you think, but I can ask you this, does learning about black history also make you uncomfortable? Because the majority of you reading this are white, and you learn black history despite the fact

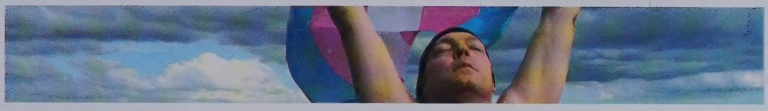
you are not an African-American. Either way, being somewhat uncomfortable in class is a small price to pay for allowing a large community to be appreciated.

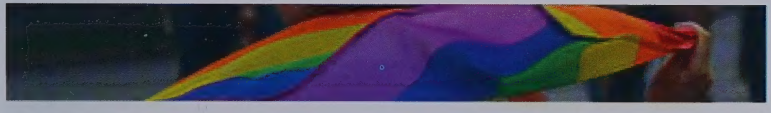
And they are most certainly underappreciated, even in their own community, anonymous said, "We're told we are just bisexuals looking for attention, and not really pan". Anonymous is non-binary, panromaic, and asexual. If you don't know what any of those refer to, I would recommend doing some research so you can better understand those who identify in the same way. The fact of the matter is, there are hundreds of different orientations when it comes to gender and sexuality, and many broadly overlap, but the difference matters to some people and that's okay.

So, you would think that within a community that celebrates acceptance and pride, there wouldn't be any hatred traded among members. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Members of the LGBTQ+ community do not just receive hate from the outside world, but from their fellow members. Some, like bisexauls, are told they don't exist. Obviously, this is very damaging in more ways than one. I mean, being told your sexuality doesn't exist would be hurtful to say the least.

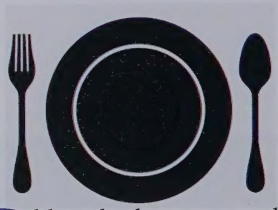
Being gay, or non-binary, or pansexual, is not a choice, as many people seem to belive. If it was a choice, who would choose to be ridiculed for their identity, stripped of their dignity, and denied their existence? Does that really seem like a choice someone would make? Now, besides homophobia, members of the LGBTQ+ community also face the problem of having to understand all this for themselves. They must do their own research, because no one will teach them. And some of the information they find on the internet may not always be true, which is why the history of the community should be taught in school. Historians have the information, but they don't put it in the history books. They pick and choose, and that needs to stop. If LGBTQ+ history is taught in school, it will help its members to better understand they are real and valid. It will help them to understand they have a history, a heritage that they can lean on. It may take a hundred years, maybe even a thousand. But one day, they will all be accepted for who they are.







Where Do The Lunch Times Go?



Has Lunch really gotten worse this year?

written by
JACOB HOUSER
designed by Jacob Houser

Although there are probably a million things Homestead students could name that make this year different from last year, if we had a hundred people lined up listing off the differences, you would probably be able to bet that all 100 students would bring up the changes to a staple part of an average student's school day- Lunch time.

The COVID-19 virus has wreaked havoc worldwide; that is a story everyone knows all too well. Due to the requirements to prevent the spread of the virus, including a recommendation of staying six feet away from everyone else if you aren't wearing a mask, lunch as well as the rest of the school day have undergone major changes and we now go to school with a routine unlike anything we've ever experienced.

"Lunch just isn't what it used to be..."

On what sophomores, juniors, and seniors would consider a normal day, there would be an abundance of kids in every lunch line, buying subs, salads, pizza, breakfast, cheeseburgers, you name it, the cafeteria has it. But due to all these requirements, changes, and so on and so forth, lunch has been reduced to 2 universal options across 4 of what used to be 7 lines. The only upside to any of this, according to most students, is that lunch is now free.

"It's sort of disappointing that lunch isn't what it used to be," said Brycton Vollmer (11), who now regularly attends virtual school. "You can still sit next to friends and all that, but not as many as what you used to be able to. Plus, there's not as many options at lunch and a lot of people's favorite options got taken off the menu."

"Coming into Homestead, I was really hoping Lunch would be a lot better than what it was at Woodside," said Chad Houser (9). "It's disappointing having a lot of the things I was looking forward to taken away.

"It's sort of depressing..."

I wanted to be able to see all the new options and different snacks. At least lunch is free.'"

At least lunch is free. It can be heard over and over. It's a reminder of the stages of grief, almost. Bargaining with ourselves- lunch isn't as good as what we'd all like it to be, but at least it's free.

Obviously, that's a bit of a dramatic take. When considering the circumstance around the change of plans it's obvious that what has happened is out of anyone's control. Here's to better lunches next year, and hopefully to the disappearance of the COVID-19 virus.

Last Year v. This Year

Last Year:

Lunch: 2.50
No Seating Arrangements
8 Lines, 2 A La Cartes
4+ Options Daily

This Year:

Lunch: Free
3 to a Table
5 lines, 1 A La Carte
2 Options Daily

2

Last Year:

~2,300 Students, all of which attended school physically

This Year:

~2,300 Students, with a large chunk attending Virtually (some classes have a majority of virtual attendants as well)

Last Year:

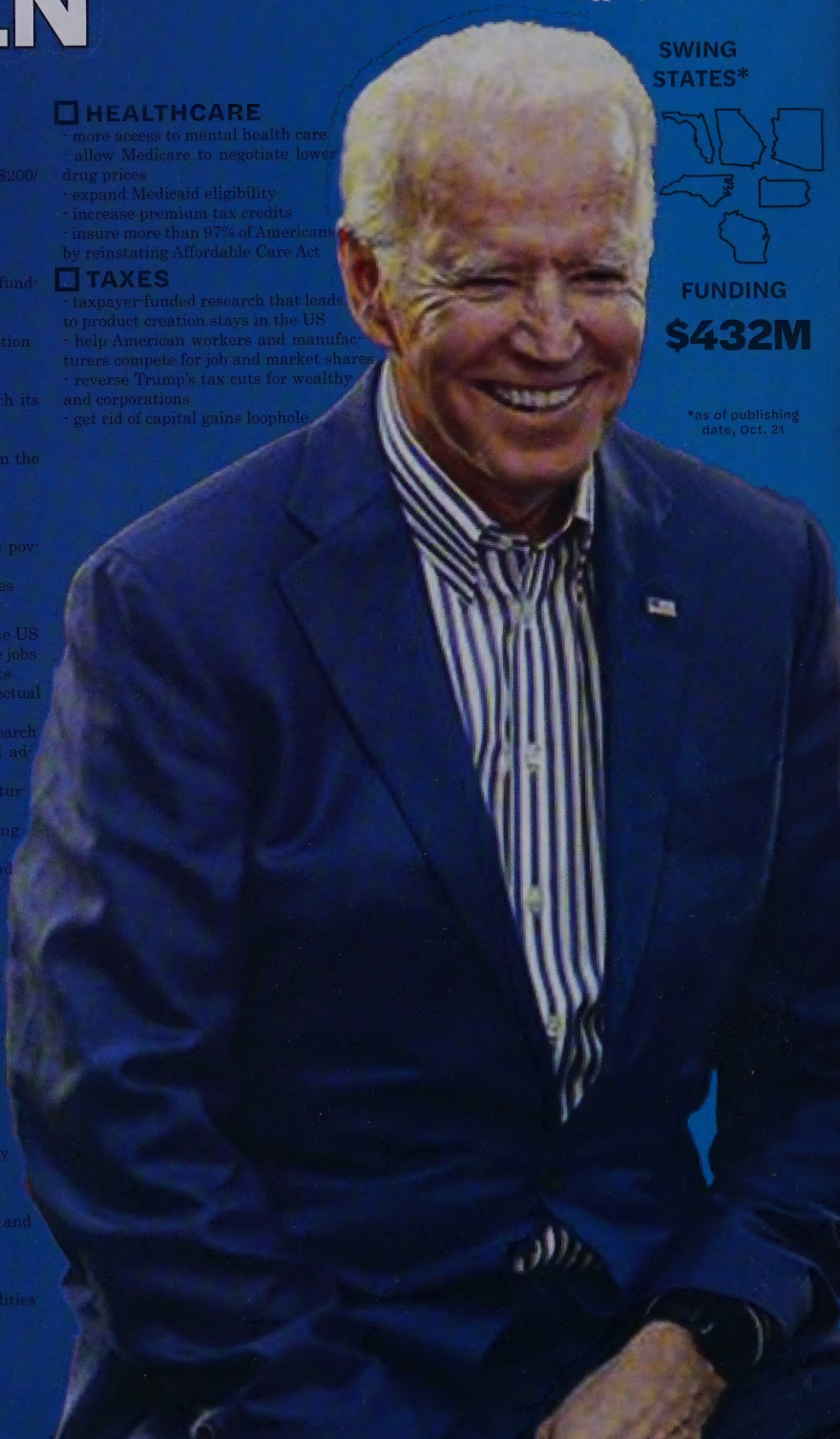
No Covid-19
No Health Guidelines
No Mask Mandate
No Stay at Home orders

This Year:

Covid-19
New Health Guidelines
Mask Mandates
(previously) Stay at Home orders

BIDEN

A hand-to-hand combat on the candidates' beliefs and positions on today's biggest policy debates.



COVID
- put national mask mandate in place
- allow paid sick leave
- increase Social Security benefits to $200/month
- make FDA vaccine info transparent
- increase amount of PPE and testing

CRIMINAL JUSTICE
- increase community policing systems' funding by $300m
- increase diversity on police staffs
- incentivize states to stop child incarceration
- end private prisons
- end death penalty
- legalize medical marijuana and research its effects
- reduce violence against women
- address systemic misconduct in police in the court

DEFENSE
- allow transgender service members
- provide for service members under the poverty line
- enforce Bill of Rights for military families

ECONOMY
- change tax code to keep companies in the US
- $300b funding for innovation will create jobs
- extend unemployment insurance benefits
- stop foreign theft of American intellectual property
- reinvest in universities' agricultural research and the SAREP to promote agricultural advancement
- work with, not against, foreign manufacturing allies
- expand microloan program for beginning farmers
- equitably allocate funding to women and communities of color: 10-20-30 plan
- State Small Business Initiative

ENVIRONMENT
- protect Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
- ban new oil and gas permits on public lands and waters
- account for climate costs in royalties
- double offshore wind by 2030
- take action against fossil fuel companies and polluters
- establish Environment/Climate Justice Division within USDOJ
- resign Paris Agreement
- net-zero carbon emissions for the US by 2050

FOREIGN POLICY
- uplift rights of women and girls at home and around world
- denuclearize North Korea
- re-enter Iran nuclear agreement
- strengthen NATO's alliance and capabilities
- end forever wars

HEALTHCARE
- more access to mental health care
- allow Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices
- expand Medicaid eligibility
- increase premium tax credits
- insure more than 97% of Americans by reinstating Affordable Care Act

TAXES
- taxpayer-funded research that leads to product creation stays in the US
- help American workers and manufacturers compete for job and market shares
- reverse Trump's tax cuts for wealthy and corporations
- get rid of capital gains loophole

SWING STATES*

FUNDING

$432M

*as of publishing date, Oct. 21

written & designed by
EMMALYN MEYER

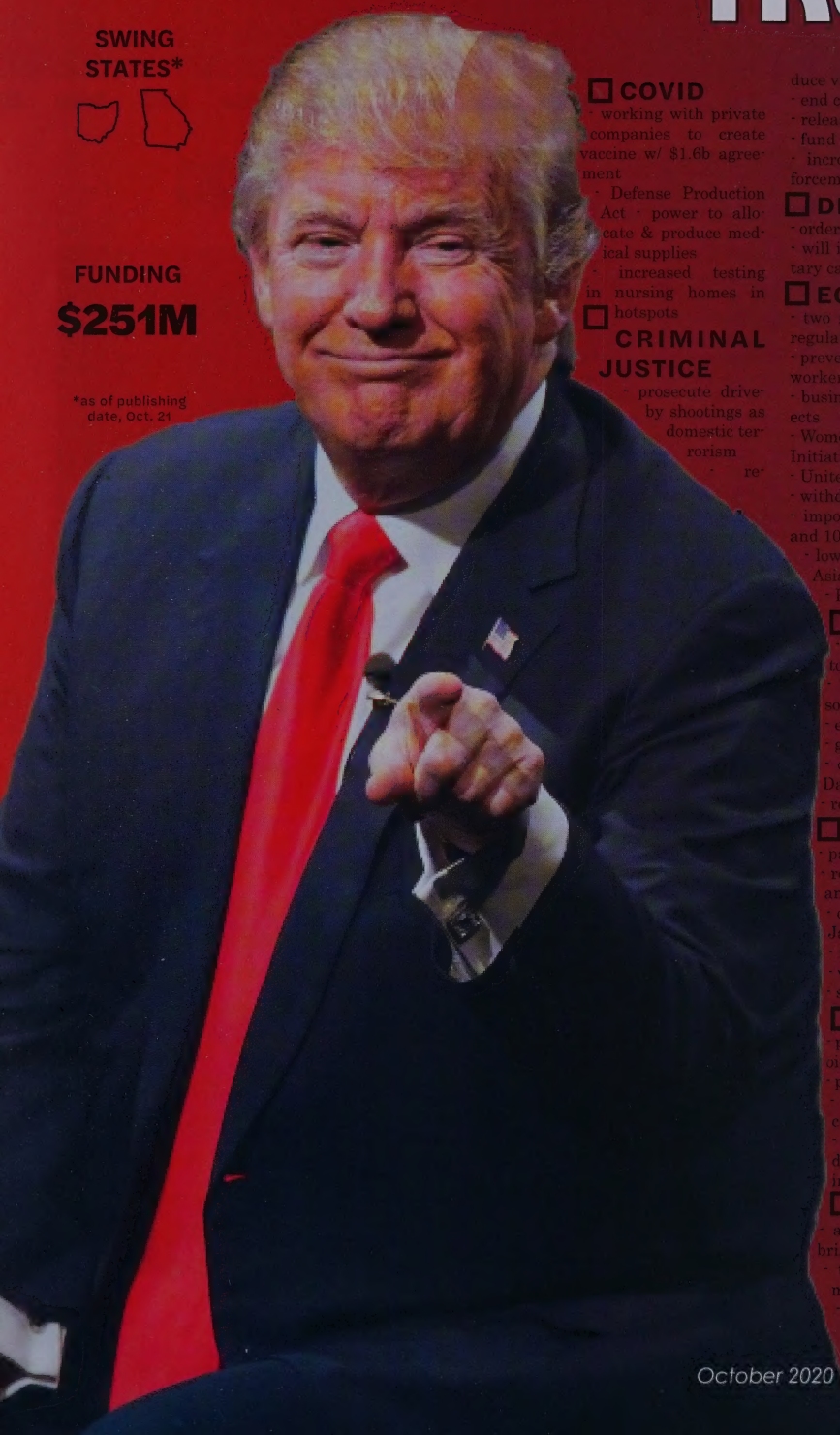
TRUMP

SWING STATES*

FUNDING

$251M

*as of publishing date, Oct. 21



COVID

- working with private companies to create vaccine w/ $1.6b agreement
- Defense Production Act - power to allocate & produce medical supplies
- increased testing in nursing homes in hotspots

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- prosecute drive-by shootings as domestic terrorism
- reduce violent crime in unsafe neighborhoods
- end cashless bail
- released 3000 Americans from prison
- fund and hire more police officers
- increase penalties for assaulting law enforcemnt officers

DEFENSE

- ordered missile strikes against Syrian airbase
- will increase defense spending, expand military capacity, modernize military capabilities

ECONOMY

- two regulations must be removed for every regulation created
- prevent Americans from losing jobs to foreign workers
- businesses invested $482b in American projects
- Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative
- United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement
- withdrew US from Trans-Pacific Partnership
- imposed 25% global tariff on steel imports and 10% tariff on aluminum imports
- lowered unemployment rates for Hispanic, Asian and African American workers
- Paycheck Protection Program

ENVIRONMENT

- opened Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to domestic energy production
- increased global exports of energy resources
- expanded offshore oil and gas drilling
- got out of Paris Agreement
- created jobs through Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines
- rescinded Clean Power Plan

FOREIGN POLICY

- passed sanctions on North Korea
- recognized Jerusalem as capital of Israel and opened embassy in Israel
- committed to defense collaboration with Japan and South Korea
- rolled back Obama's deal with Cuba
- will bring back 1 million jobs from China
- stop endless wars

HEALTHCARE

- provided $500m to prevent and treat opioid abuse
- prevented overcharging seniors for drugs
- improved fiscal sustainability of Medicare
- protected people with pre-existing conditions by covering insulin, inhalers, etc. in high deductible plans

TAXES

- allowed tax credits for companies that bring back jobs from China
- tax credits for products invented and manufactured in America.
- boosted take-home pay and kept jobs by cutting taxes
- imposed 10% tax return of corporate profits held offshore

Meet the School Board Candidates

Jennifer Bennett

District 3

As an educator and Southwest Allen County School parent, I have a passion for educating and empowering our children. I have lived in the SACS district with my husband Stephen for 21 years. I have had the privilege of being active in the SACS school system with our four children for nearly 15 years. I have enjoyed a long history of collaborating with parents in educating their children. While in college I worked for a preparatory school for students with severe learning disabilities as a dorm parent, counselor, and substitute teacher. After receiving my degree in education, I taught language arts and science in the private school in Chicago and a public school in a Chicago suburb. When my husband's job brought us to Fort Wayne in 1999, I substitute taught in the SACS school system during my first pregnancy. I then worked at home to raise our four children. For the past 20 years, I also have been going into the home of SACS parents and teaching them how to establish routines for their babies and working with them on appropriate discipline, structure, and training for their children. I have a heart for children to reach their full potential. If elected, I promise to bring a strong advocate for your children in our SACS teachers.

Jennifer Bennett's plan if elected is as follows:

T- Training in diversity and cultural sensitivity and implementing a student/teacher exchange program that will increase exposure to diversity

E- Empowering students who face bullying, sexual harassment, and racial discrimination

A- Achieving a healthy and safe environment for our students through plans and safety measures that are data-driven, research supported, and state-of-the-art

C- Communicating effectively and transparently with all SACS stakeholders: parents, students, teachers, administration, staff, and the community at large

H- Helping alleviate teacher shortages by implementing family-friendly tandem teaching contracts and by implementing programs that improve the quality of life for our teachers

Tracy Bilodeau

District 3

Nine years ago, my husband and I returned to Fort Wayne with our three young daughters. We chose to settle in Southwest Allen County because of the excellent school district. I have spent the last nine years volunteering in classrooms and on committees and PTC's. These activities have provided key opportunities for me to establish relationships with families, teachers, staff, and administrators. My daughters are currently in 11th grade at HHS, 7th grade at Woodside, and 5th grade at Deer Ridge. I remain an active parent volunteer with a hands-on understanding of current SACS classrooms, curriculum, and programs.

I am running for SACS School Board, District 3 (At Large) because I am a proud SACS parent. I believe that service on the SACS School Board is a privilege. I believe in our district, in our community, and in the excellence for which it is known.

In preparation for my candidacy, it was important to me to understand the roles and responsibilities of the school board. I have attended every school board meeting since July. I have met all five current school board members and several past board members. I met with Superintendent Dr. Downs, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Simmers, and SACS Business Manager Mark Snyder. I attended the Indiana School Board Association new candidate webinar. Most importantly, I have met with numerous parents, teachers, and community members in order to listen to their thoughts and opinions.

I am committed to engaging with parents and community stakeholders. I believe that our teachers should be supported and appreciated so that they can continue to develop and grow professionally. I am committed to excellence in education for every student at all levels and all abilities of learning. I will build a collaborative relationship with our superintendent, our educators, and the community in order to maintain and expand programs that promote student success.

I am Tracy Bilodeau, and I ask that you choose me on or before November 3.
bilodeauforschoolboard.com

compiled and designed by
MIKAYLA HAVISON

District 3 Scott Myers

I am a Fort Wayne native and my parents were both teachers. After high school here in Fort Wayne, I was fortunate to study medicine at Indiana University and am a pediatric oncology physician. Additionally, I wanted to understand more about public health from a policy perspective and went on to receive a master's degree in Public Health. I want to mention my background to give you a sense of why I've been encouraged to run for school board by friends and colleagues.

As you can see from my experience my professional life has centered around helping kids. As I consider various ways to serve in my community, that is the key criteria for getting involved. My first and greatest priority is keeping students safe. My campaign is centered on this theme and my credentials will show me to be the most qualified to deliver on this issue. I have studied under the nation's foremost policy expert on COVID-19, Dr. Fauci. I am ready and able to help SACS navigate how they can safely conduct school in this pandemic. I have also done extensive study on the mental health effects of isolation and I can help to work with administrators and teachers to assist students struggling with challenges from suicidal thoughts to bullying.

I am ready to be an objective voice. I believe that I provide a voice for taxpayers and a voice for students who don't have the benefit of a board member parent. No student should come before another and no program should be prioritized based on a single student's need. Thank you for your interests in this race.

District 1 Bradley Mills

Over 23 years ago, Kim and I intentionally moved our family to the SACS District for the promise of a great education for our children. We could not have made a better decision. I am running for re-election to the school board to give back to this community. I will do my best to ensure that the next generation has the opportunity to receive the same or better education than my children have received.

There are three things on which I will focus my time over the next four years. The first is to oversee the Construction/Renovation of your high school - My "day jobs" have given me valuable and pertinent experiences in managing construction projects. That experience, along with my education and background in finance, will be useful assets for the school corporation so that we receive the best possible educational facility at the least possible cost to the taxpayers.

Another thing I will work to accomplish is to have our students live stream and record all school board meetings. This will give our students valuable experiences and allow our busy parents, teachers, and community members the opportunity to observe the meetings at their leisure. The more engaged and involved the community is in our schools, the better they will be!

Finally, I will work to increase student and public input in school board meetings. Several former school board members have run on the platform that they want to do the same, but did nothing to make this a reality. My vision is that we will allow several members of the public to speak for (two minutes?) every meeting. This will help drive engagement in the community and generate more and better ideas for our future.

District 1 Paul Moss

Unfortunately Paul Moss was out of town when these interviews were compiled. He would, however, like to pass on his contact information to Spartana readers. If you would like to contact him, you can email him at paulmoss@reagan.com or give him a call at (260)-348-0099.

Spartana

Issue 5 February 2021

Just as the vaccine and practices like mask wearing and handwashing are imperative in flattening the curve, so too is widespread testing for the COVID-19. Read our feature story on page 16.

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Ordering food from local restaurants is the safest way to support them these days. Here are some ideas.

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Staff Members

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From the Editors...

Dear Reader,

Welcome back to the Spartana! This is our first issue of 2021 and only the second we have been able to print this school year so we are very excited to share it with you. January and half of February have already flown by, giving us a lot to cover in these pages. We have some new staff members this year to help us bring you the latest news. Kaiya Cronkhite, Weldon Rodocker, Katelyn Styborski, and Thomas Hill all moved up from the Journalism 1 class and are already writing and designing their own stories. So proud! Our staff is now up to 14, so you can start to expect longer issues and more content from us. With our larger staff, we hope to revive our Instagram account, @spartana_news, and post more frequently on our website, hhsspartana.com, in the coming months.

While all five of the seniors on staff are excited to graduate and face the future, we are still committed to the Spartana and providing you with exciting and informative content. As we mentioned, a lot has happened this semester, so this will be an eclectic issue.

This month, we bring you stories over everything from the Coronavirus vaccine to Omegle, the popular site where people talk to complete strangers for fun. Our Sports section is back with an article over the #1 state-ranked Spartan basketball team. We're also dedicating sections to covering some of the pop culture news that teens are talking about today, as well as a few of our favorite news anchors and political news from the year so far. And the J List has returned as well, where I (June) recommend some lesser-known restaurants to order from and support in this crazy pandemic. Also, we will uncover the truth about the disappearance of Coolmathgames.com and how it relates to Homestead's students. Speaking of our students, what has the student council been up to these days? We'll tell you all about it in this issue.

We bring you all of this and so much more between these pages and we hope you have a wonderful February!

With Love,
June and Emmalyn
Editors in Chief

- The J List -

ORDER TAKEOUT SAVE LOCAL RESTAURANTS

written & designed by
JUNE HILL

We all know COVID-19 has not been easy on the restaurant industry. According to CNN, 17% of restaurants have shut down nationwide due to the pandemic, and locally, things are no different. Small restaurants are struggling to stay afloat and one way to support them safely is by simply ordering takeout. This month I have gathered a few top choices around Fort Wayne for the next time you or your family does not want to cook at home. Remember to tip generously and I hope you enjoy these ideas!

Mahnin (260) 711-3584

Burmese food is always excellent for take-out. The pad thai at Mahnin is a safe and delicious option if it is your first time ordering from there - just be sure to get some egg rolls too. Like Seoul Garden, Mahnin is moderately priced but you get a satisfyingly large entree that will enough for lunch the next day.

Taj Mahal and Taste of India

These two Indian restaurants are close to my heart, especially Taste of India, which has been my family's go-to Indian take-out place my whole life. The samosas are a 10, and the butter chicken and saag paneer also always make it on our order. And you can't go without the Naan! For an Indian take-out option closer to Homestead I would recommend Taj Mahal, which I was introduced to more recently, but is also very good.

Mo's Tacos (260) 484-1988

Have you ever heard of El Azteca on State street? Some people like to say it is the best Mexican food in Fort Wayne. They are wrong. You can find far superior and more authentic Mexican food inside a Marathon gas station on Goshen Road. Best chorizo tacos I have ever had in my 18 years on this planet. My parents somehow always end up ordering from there on nights that I work and then I resent them for the next few days. Super cheap, super delicious, highly recommend it.

Seoul Garden (260) 484-0395

Seoul Garden is a small Korean restaurant with what might be the very best fried rice and Bibimbap in Fort Wayne. The food is moderately priced, but each full-sized entree could easily be split between two people. I have eaten at Seoul Garden for as long as I can remember and it would be heartbreaking for them to go out of business because of this pandemic!

BurgerFi (260) 444-4201

Technically this is a chain, but Fort Wayne's BurgerFi is the only location in Indiana, so we have to keep it running. The french fries are to die for and the burgers actually look the way they do in the advertisements. Prices are moderate and the menu is extremely versatile, catering to vegan and gluten-free diets with the Beyond burger and alternate bun choices.

Images from Google

EYES ON THE PRIZE

How some Homestead students started investing and you can too

written and designed by
JULIA EPLING

As COVID-19 forced people to stay home for the past few months, many people have taken this as an opportunity to begin investing.

This includes several students who have found themselves with more time on their hands. Robinhood, a popular stock-picking app, raised $280 million and gained 3.1 million new users in the first quarter of 2020.

Amelia Elliot began investing in January 2019 and has seen great success doing so. While she doesn't have a specific strategy, she is a member of the Investment Club.

The co-president of Investment Club, Krishna Kalyan Podishetti, has also been following the markets, whether it be stock, bond, commodity, or even the housing market. He uses online simulators for the stock market so that he can be prepared to officially invest once he turns 18.

"The main purpose of the investment club is to learn about investing in the stock market by competing in competitions. Since everyone has a different investing style, I just put the members of the club out in the competition. Therefore, they can discover their investing styles without any influence from me. Investing is almost like writing. To develop a writing style, one must put themselves out there and write freely. They learn from their mistakes," Podishetti (12) said.

While the stock market can seem intimidating at first, it's a great idea to start investing young. It doesn't take much to get started, and you'll learn how to invest without the risk of losing a large sum of money.

"I invested almost as a joke, I offered the stock to my father, not thinking he would actually invest and he did. I think I bought $800 initially, and I bought the stock around $6. It is now at $41.98, so I have more than tripled my investment," Elliott (11) said.

For Elliott, she invested into an app that she had a positive experience with. Buying into what you consume is a common strategy for younger and newer investors. Elliott saw major growth by investing into Snapchat, an app she frequently uses.

One tip for student investors is to invest a little each month.

You don't need to drop hundreds of dollars; instead, you can put away just $20 or $30 a month. While this might seem like a lot, think about it in a different way.

If you spend about $5 on a coffee twice a week, that's roughly $40 a month, or $480 a year. Instead of getting a coffee, you can invest that money into the stock market and earn more. If you are willing to watch what you spend and look for little ways to save on a regular schedule, you can make your money grow.

As mentioned earlier, Coronavirus has greatly affected the stock market; however, this doesn't mean you cannot start investing. Even with just a little bit invested, you're more likely to follow the market trends.

Podishetti prefers to use a long term outlook and look at developing economies for investing.

"Countries such as India, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Russia, and Nigeria are great for both bond and stock investing as their economies are expanding and they are industrializing. For companies, I look at what product they look to produce in the future. For example, Pfizer plans on releasing a new medicine for a disease common in the baby boomer generation. I don't necessarily look at the numbers but rather the growth in the past and potential new products or expansions," Podishetti said.

No matter what strategy you use, all investments involve risk taking. It's important to go into any investment fully understanding that you could lose some money in any one investment.

A common phrase among investors is, "the greater the risk, the greater the reward;" however, taking major risks can be avoided. Investors can protect themselves by spreading their money among several investments. That way, if one investment loses money, the other investments could make up for those losses.

"Investing is making an educated guess on the past and the future. It's essentially legal betting (that) helps companies and the economy grow. No one person can share an investing style. People value different things. Some people would like to be more conservative in their investment and not want to lose money. Others are willing to lose all their money for the shot at being rich. It is a spectrum," Podishetti said.

If you're interested in learning more about investing, come to an Investment Club meeting.

-risk and reward-

"Investing is making an educated guess on the past and the future. It's essentially legal betting (that) helps companies and the economy grow." **-Krishna Kalyan Podishetti**

Your New Years Resolutions suck.
Here's how to fix them

written & designed by
KATELYN STYBORSKI

There comes a time every year when people aim to better themselves. That time is at the beginning of the new year, and the end of the old. We don't talk about the middle. With the promise of a new year comes hope for new opportunities, new beginnings and new ways to benefit yourself. In reality, it's no different than any other day of the year, but we humans tend to magnify the value of time. Considering we have a limited amount of time to live our lives, we naturally want to "live life to the fullest." The desire to better oneself paired with the looming threat of death causes us to chase after an idealized version of ourselves. That's where New Year's Resolutions come in. When the new year rolls around, people start making lists of goals to complete within the next 365 days.

The one problem, however, is that New Year's Resolutions are notorious for their incompletion. "I ha(ve n)ever met a single person who had adhered to a new year's resolution" Luna Thomas (10) said.

"(New year's resolutions) have (n)ever worked and...we should just stop doing them" Renny Scouten (10) said. Why don't new year's resolutions ever get completed, though? The main issue lies in the resolution itself.

Ellie Walters (8) explains that her resolutions, "tend to overwhelm (her) more than motivate (her)" because she makes her goals "too difficult" to complete. When we make our new year's resolutions too demanding, it makes it harder for us to complete them. This leads to struggles with our self-worth as we feel like we're not good enough to complete our goals.

Thomas emphasizes this point, "people (...) give up on (new year's resolutions) the moment that they put themselves at even a slight disadvantage." The stress of not being able to complete a resolution causes us to give up. If we don't feel like we can live up to our expectations of ourselves, we lower our expectations.

The tradition of making new year's resolutions is supposed to motivate us to grow and become better versions of ourselves. However, they seem to only aid in the downward spiral of self-worthlessness. If your resolutions are too difficult to complete, then you won't put forth the effort that's necessary to to abide by your resolutions. From there, you'll start to feel guilty for not completing them. This will lead to a battle with your self-worth and will ultimately discourage you from making new year's resolutions in the future.

> "Resolutions should be something you do on your own (and should be) done for yourself."
> - Renny Scouten (10)

So how can we make smart, achievable resolutions that we actually want to complete? Walters gives the advice that our resolutions should be, "realistic [and] easily achievable goals." Your resolutions should be goals that you can physically accomplish. You know your limits, and you shouldn't push past them if you don't want to harm yourself. Plus, making your goals realistic makes them easier to be completed, which will benefit your mental health, as you'll be more efficient in what you do.

Scouten claims that new year's resolutions should "100% (focus on) actions" rather than personality changes. She explains that, "self therapy if stuff you've (got to) work on for (...) years," whereas making short-term goals are easier to complete. For example, saying you're going to work out every week is different than saying you're going to be more optimistic. If your goals focus on physical actions you can take, you'll feel more accomplished, since you can actively see your progress. She also claims that resolutions, "should be something you do on your own (and should be) do(ne) for yourself." The more passionate you are about your resolutions, the more likely you'll complete them. If you want to do something, you'll typically do it. Don't torture yourself with emotionless goals that will make you suffer in the process of bettering yourself.

New Year's Resolutions are supposed t0 improve our lives and make us feel accomplished. They should be personal goals that will make us happy to complete. Instead of focusing on the "concept of needing to better," as Renny Scouten calls it, we should make goals that fulfil our own desires. Your resolutions should make your life better.

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Types of New Year's Resolutions We're Most Likely to Make in 2021*

Health	59%
Financial	38%
Relationships	26%
Habitual (biting nails, being late, etc.)	22%
None	18%
Educational	17%

How to Keep Your New Year's Resolutions

- Make realistic goals
- Keep goals simple
- Create goals you're passionate about
- Take baby steps
- Find ways to stay motivated - Give yourself a reward
- Get support from friends and family
- Remind yourself that it's okay to make mistakes.

Adventure into Omegle

written by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN
designed by June Hill

It's a testament to 2021 that being bored is kind of a rarity, especially since the creation and consequential popularity of Tiktok, Instagram, and Snapchat that simply exist to fill the void. In a year of unexpected twists and turns, Tiktok's universal appeal has led to the resurfacing popularity of Omegle—yet another app to fill the void. Omegle is the modern day Russian Roulette in the sense that once something traumatizing is seen, the game is instantly over. A user can log onto the website and video chatting service and be matched randomly with another user, although you can narrow it down with certain search tags. It's a very quick game that's also really easy to lose.

Any casual internet observer remembers the nascent website's popularity in the Internet Golden Age of 2014-2015. It became a trend for popular Youtubers to do the "Omegle Challenge," or to meet people online and engage in strange—sometimes legally dubious—conversations. What resulted were hilarious compilations of the meetings, often underscored by the inherent awkwardness of meeting strangers through an online chat service. For a while, Omegle seemed like it would only reappear in the darkest spots of the Internet, until a few Tik Tok creators popularized it once again. Since the website's resurgence, however, we felt it necessary to take a deep dive into the dark world of Omegle.

Created on March 25, 2009 by a young Leif K-Brooks, Omegle was intended to be used as a way for people to meet outside of their normal social groups, a sort of melting pot for introverts. Nearly twelve years later, Omegle is now used for gaining clout on social media or to see your favorite Internet persona. But, as we've stated previously, the chance of meeting someone worth talking to is miniscule.

The good news for anyone frequenting Omegle chat rooms is that they are monitored to some extent, but most of the responsibility falls upon its users to protect their identities. Additionally, text chats are saved in Omegle servers and kept for at least 120 days. Webcam images are often stored in Omegle servers as well. As anonymous Omegle claims to be, it's not anonymous enough to keep someone completely safe.

That being said, we decided to document an excursion of our own into the dark side of Omegle to see how long we would last in Russian Roulette. It took all of five minutes to lose the game, but there were plenty of memorable moments into just a brief excursion into the wondrous world of Omegle.

The first person to appear was a young child who quickly turned to beration once he realized that I had not talked within the first five seconds that we connected. There seemed to be another child with him, but only one chose to show their face. In the moment of shock I had while I realized that I had just been bullied by a 7 year old, I promptly disconnected.

Unfortunately the next person I connected with, a man with Tik Tok led lights, seemed uninterested to talk to me. He had a shocked look on his face, which only hurt me a little. I promptly matched with a girl with a red screen and had a conversation about her moving to Austin, Texas from California. That was our one and only conversation topic, and I was confused as to how we spent nearly thirty minutes talking about it.

I had an interaction with a man who appeared to be an Elvis cosplayer, which I somehow did not realize when first meeting him. The clearly-dyed black, glossy hair and white suit apparently weren't enough to convince me, and I definitely blame myself and the forces at be for this. We stared at each other in confusion, and it was clear that he wanted me to recognize who he was; I was unable to for the time being. He huffed and promptly ended the chat, and only after did I think about the incredible conversation that might have been had—namely, why an Elvis impersonator was on an online chat service waiting for people to recognize him. I have no choice but to believe that this was some sort of social experiment.

The next couple of conversations were uneventful, but fully appreciated. Surprisingly, there were a lot of people who lived in Nordic countries and wanted to know my opinion on the inauguration. They were more the type of people who were only on Omegle because they were bored. It was heaps better than the last time I was on Omegle, when I was losing Russian Roulette every few minutes.

The best experience I had that evening was when I talked to a Naruto cosplayer. It was honestly some of the most engaging conversation I had in awhile, disregarding the fact that I had never watched Naruto. She was the last person I talked to that evening, and it was a good note to end my excursion on.

Omegle is a dark place, where you might sometimes meet good people if you're lucky. Being bored is a rarity, but finding a quality platform to spend it on, makes free time worth it. It all depends on how you define quality, and although Omegle has a couple diamonds, it is completely buried by the pure filth layer one must sift through. We do not advise an excursion on Omegle, unless one is particularly bored. If you do decide to venture into Omegle, be safe and be aware.

"I haven't been on for a long time and not gonna lie, I really shouldn't have been on it so young, but it is fun until you see something you don't want to.
- Anonymous Junior

"All I can say is there are tons of things that should not be there.
- Anonymous Junior

Graphics from Canva

The Politico Report

written & designed by
EMMALYN MEYER

A Runaway Vote

Just when you thought the election season was over, the beginning of January stirred the pot in Georgia with a Senate runoff race. Normally, the runoffs of Southern states aren't something to pay much attention to, but this year, they had the possibility to make a big change in Congress.

The runoff electoral system overtook the state's old "county-unit" system in 1962, which amplified rural voting power while disadvantaging black voters. The new system, however, was created with an intent to break up "blocs" of black voters who would all vote for the same candidate, unlike white Georgian voters.

The new electoral system required a majority of the vote (over 50 percent) rather than a plurality (not over 50, but more than the other candidates), for a candidate to win. It has resulted in 20 Georgia county elections "where at least 35 black candidates won the most votes in their initial primaries, but then lost in runoffs as voters coalesced around a white opponent," the United States Department of Justice said in 1990 per a lawsuit against Georgia's runoff system.

Nevertheless, Rev. Raphael Warnock, a black Democratic candidate, succeeded this year in his runoff election on January

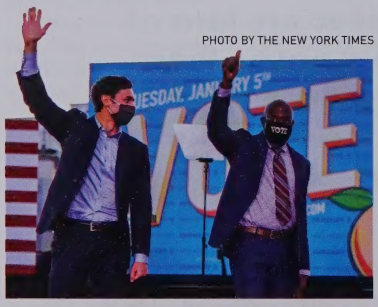


PHOTO BY THE NEW YORK TIMES

5th against incumbent Republican Kelly Loeffler. Jon Ossoff, the youngest elected senator since 1980 and first Jewish senator from the deep south, won as a Democrat against incumbent Republican David Perdue.

In the Nov. 3 election, Ossoff secured 47.95 percent of the vote to Perdue's 49.73, and Warnock had 32.9 to Loeffler's 25.9, with the other two candidates, Doug Collins and Deborah Jackson, earning 20 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively. In the runoff, however, Ossoff won 50.6 percent of the vote and Warnock won 51 percent, leading to both yanking the Senate seats from the Republican party.

Voter turnout played a major role in these unprecedented wins. According to FiveThirtyEight, an ABC News Internet Venture, 4.4 million people voted in the runoff, which is 90 percent of the turnout in the general election. Stacey Abrams, voting rights activist and founder of the organization Fair Fight, was a key player in getting the vote out for both the general and runoff elections.

These last-minute seat grabs were able to slightly tip the scales in the Senate in the Democrats' favor, as it is now split 50-50 down party lines. With Democrat VP Kamala Harris being the tie breaking vote and the House staying in a Democrat majority, the party once again has the chance to pursue more progressive and liberal bills such as increasing the minimum wage and passing/amending the Environmental Protection Act.

Another Day at the Capitol

The first Wednesday of the new year, Jan. 6, began unnoticed by most American people, with only a few cautiously paying notice to the proceedings of the House and Senate, who were counting the votes of the Electoral College and certifying the election results. Anyone who had been following the "election fraud" lawsuits brought on by former president Donald Trump suspected some pushback by Trump supporters during this vote count, but few could have guessed the magnitude of the fight.

That morning, Trump was holding a rally in Washington, D.C.: A "March to Save America" to continue convincing his followers that the election had been stolen from him and president-elect Joe Biden would be an illegitimate leader. The narrative of the "rigged election" and rampant voter fraud that Trump and his fans stirred up since before the election came to a head on the first Wednesday of the new year.

At around 1 pm, Trump finished his speech with a push to directly confront the congressional leaders on their acceptance of the fraudulent election results. This incited the crowd to walk down Pennsylvania Ave. towards the Capitol, subsequently clashing with the police outside the building. Three men were involved in the call for the National Guard to intervene: Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund, House Sergeant Paul Irving, and Senate Sergeant Michael Stenger. By the time the call was approved by Capitol security, an hour later, the outnumbered police officers backed off from the barricade to the building's entrance due to an increased threat from the rioters, allowing them to enter.

The armed mob broke windows and stormed through the halls towards the unsealed meeting chambers, where the Senate proceedings continued until police entered to evacuate the room at 2:30. At the same time, the House chamber disbanded and members were instructed to wear gas masks as protection from the tear gas used against resisting rioters.

The mob was able to enter and loot the offices of several Congressional leaders, making away with valuable possessions. The panic buttons installed in every office were also removed at some point, which made it impossible for terrified staff members to receive help while in hiding. Also, police discovered two pipe bombs planted just a few blocks from the Capitol, which were detonated immediately and never exploded; however, they served as evidence that the event was planned and the pipe bombs were meant to keep the police away from the Capitol.

There were clear attempts made by

Trump to incite violence inside the Capitol once the swarm had entered, as he tweeted that Vice President Mike Pence "didn't have the courage to do what should have been done." Pence made it clear in the joint session that he was going to certify the vote, which angered the president. This led to rioters chanting to "Hang Pence," among other pieces of violent speech.

Several of the President's tweets were flagged or removed by Twitter for inciting violence and hateful speech, and those statements became evidence against Trump in his following impeachment given by the House and trial by the Senate (*as of February 10th, the publishing date, the Senate has not voted to convict or acquit the former president).

Although the two houses were able to count the votes and certify the election results in the end, the incident caused the deaths of one Capitol police officer and four protesters, as well as the injuries of more than 150 Capitol police officers. It also left lasting trauma on members of Congress: notably, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has come forward on both Instagram and Twitter to inform her followers of how the riot affected her and the other congressmen and women.

A month later, the details of the incident and the individuals involved are still being investigated to ensure justice prevails and future attempts at violence at such a large scale are prevented.

A Cause to Unite

Although it could be considered less ceremonious than previous years allowed for, the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris on Jan. 20 drew the nation's attention for several reasons.

As it was the first presidential inaugural ceremony to occur during a global pandemic, many precautions were taken to ensure the safety of the attendees and those who would normally attend the event. The National Mall, for example, is a gathering place for Americans watching the event, who can number in the hundreds of thousands in a normal year. This year, though, 200,000 flags from all 50 states and U.S. territories decorated the strip, representing all who could not attend.

PHOTO BY CNN

The ceremony involved performances from several well-known artists, including Garth Brooks singing "Amazing Grace," Lady Gaga singing the National Anthem, and Jennifer Lopez singing "This Land is Your Land" and "America the Beautiful."

Amanda Gorman performed an inaugural poem she wrote, titled "The Hill We Climb." Gorman was the youngest inaugural poet in history at 23 years old, and her poem contained messages of establishing national unity and facilitating healing for the traumatic events that mark the history of the nation. Pieces of her poem were inspired by the events of the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol.

"Poetry is typically the touchstone that we go back to when we have to remind ourselves of the history that we stand on, and the future that we stand for," Gorman said in an interview with the New York Times.

One facet of the inauguration that resonated with many Gen-Z individuals was the attire of many leaders at the event, including First Lady Jill Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and even Former First Lady Michelle Obama, who remains, along with her husband, a key figure of the Democratic party today.

Fitting with the inauguration's theme, "America United," the three women wore monochrome dresses and coats, and each had symbolic reasons for their style. Jill Biden and Harris wore different shades of blue to represent the Democratic party's signature color. All of Harris's inaugural pieces featured the work of young independent Black designers, as a testament to her heritage and the future of Black Americans in power.

Another recurring theme was the color purple in the appearances of many attendees. The color is often associated with regality, as well as the suffrage movement of the early 1900s. Purple could also represent the blending of American blue and red politics, once again symbolizing unity for the country.

And, of course, one cannot go without mentioning the Twitter meme hallmark of inaugural fashion: Bernie Sanders and his mittens. A testament to his Vermont roots and the cold inauguration day weather, his stature and style was fully recognized by mainstream media.

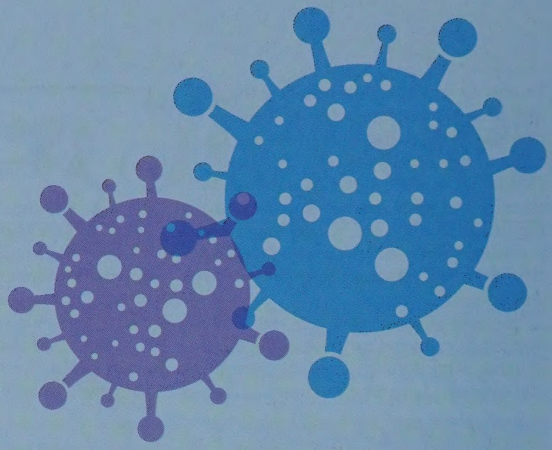
Biden and Harris brought about their message of American unity to the people through this ceremony and memorialized the dawn of a new era as they promised the country a strong executive leadership for the next four years.

PHOTO BY THE NEW YORK TIMES

FEATURE

TAKING A SHOT

at flattening the curve



written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

"Do we prioritize infrastructure or lives saved? Those are different strategies," Allen County (Ind.) Health Commissioner Dr. Matthew Sutter said during the January 5 "COVID-19 Vaccines: What You Need to Know" webinar. "Right now, we've got a relatively limited supply (of vaccines) and a tremendous amount of demand."

On February 8, the Indiana State Department of Health reported that a total of 699,769 first doses were administered statewide and that a total of 223,576 Hoosiers are fully vaccinated. Currently, healthcare workers, first responders and Hoosiers 65 years or older are eligible to receive the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine.* Vaccinations for the latter two groups began as part of phase 1b of Indiana's vaccine rollout. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Indiana has received more than 1.1 million doses of vaccine.

Like with most other diseases, COVID-19 vaccinations aim to help build herd immunity — the point at which a disease does not naturally spread throughout a population. For reference, an influenza vaccination rate of 80 to 90 percent is recommended to achieve herd immunity and protect both healthy and high-risk persons.

"If (the COVID-19 vaccine) stops transmission, (herd immunity) could be achieved at as low as 50%, it could be as high as 80%. Experts disagree but it's probably somewhere in that range. The more infectious the virus, the higher the number (of immune) needs to be," Sutter said. "Even if you do get the vaccine, you still need to wear a mask because you might still get infected and spread it to other people."

To fully understand the progression towards herd immunity, it is necessary to take a closer look at Pfizer's and Moderna's messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) vaccines. With an unanticipated application of the freshman year biology curriculum, comprehension of the immunization process is simple. Cells learn to create the all too familiar spike protein of the coronavirus based on instructional code found in mRNA that the vaccine delivers. Once it identifies the protein as a threat, the cell creates protective antibodies in an immune response. Sutter stated that, thus far, there has been no legitimate evidence of COVID-19 mRNA vaccines altering a recipient's DNA.

"Vaccination itself should be relatively quick. We're hoping to achieve about a three to four minute vaccination interaction," Allen County Department Administrator Mindy Waldron said during the webinar. "We hope to (administer) 120 to 140 vaccines an hour. It might start out slower because we are highly dependent on the amount of vaccines shipped to us."

Waldron added that the prioritization groups in each phase of the vaccine rollout are decided by risk factors, such as age or pre-existing conditions. The vaccine will likely not be available to the general public for the foreseeable future. Notification of rollout to the general public will be done via press releases and other public media. Additionally, the locations that can administer vaccines are limited to hospitals and authorized pharmacies.

"We have to remember that what we say today (could) change at any moment," Waldron said. "We will be starting with a low amount of vaccines, which is normal. Once we get into full force, we will operate multiple days a week with 40 to 50 plus people working."

Just as the vaccine and practices like mask wearing and handwashing are imperative in flattening the curve, so too is widespread testing for the coronavirus disease. The National Institutes of Health detailed that "identifying infected individuals while they are presymptomatic, as well as those who are asymptomatic, will play a major role in stopping the pandemic."

Testing is a relatively simple process that helps save lives by preventing spread of the virus through possible medical treatment, self isolation and contact tracing. Nationally, testing has evolved from preliminary throat swab samples to the now common nose swab samples; less intrusive saliva sample testing is being developed for extensive use. On average, COVID-19 test results are reported within 48 hours by text message, email or phone call.

Of Indiana's estimated population of 6.85 million people, over 3.01 million have been tested, with 21.3% of unique individuals cumulatively testing positive. Of Homestead High School's student population of approximately 2,343, a total of 33 students have reportedly tested positive this school year — a positive test rate of 1.41% according to the Indiana State Department of Health.*

In Allen County, there are 10 COVID-19 testing sites open eight hours a day from Monday to Friday. Two of these sites are community locations which provide free COVID-19 testing. Making an appointment through online registration is required, since walk-ins are not available. All Hoosiers are eligible to receive testing with proof of residence.

*Information current as of Tuesday, February 8.

Quick facts on Indiana COVID-19

VACCINES TESTING

1.41 percent cumulative positive test rate at Homestead HS

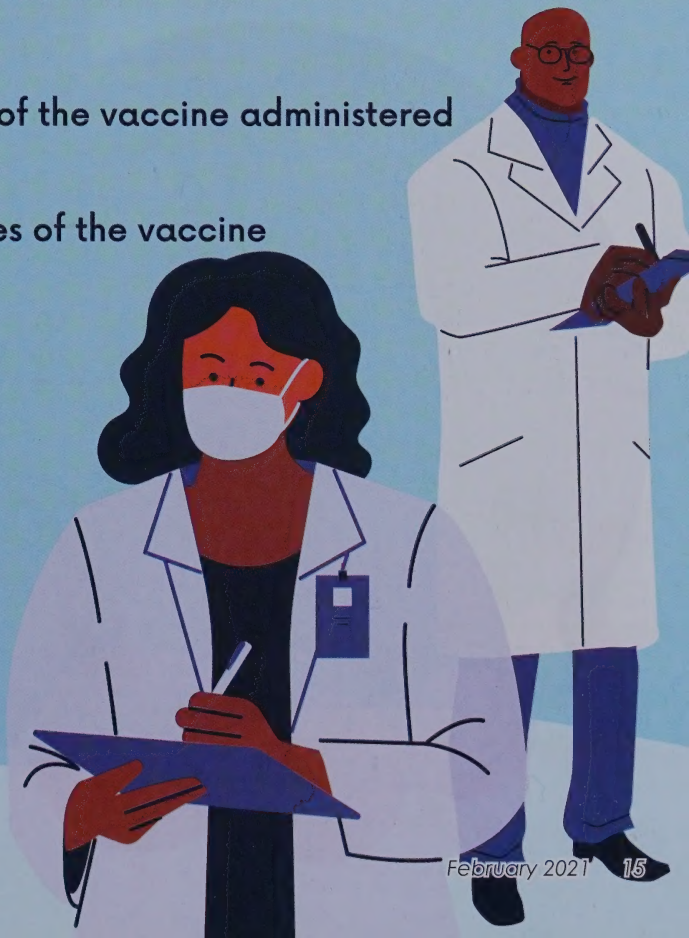
10 COVID-19 testing sites in Allen County

21.3 percent cumulative positive test rate (unique individuals) in Indiana

223,576 Hoosiers fully vaccinated

699,769 total first doses of the vaccine administered

1,106,550 available doses of the vaccine statewide



Get tested today!

DESIGN TEMPLATE AND GRAPHICS COURTESY OF CANVA

What's Poppin?

written by
ELYSSA HUFF
designed by Ganga Subramanian

Welcome to the first edition of "What's Poppin?" a column that keeps up with the latest pop culture news of the world. Since pop-culture is becoming ever more important in our modern world, I have been forced to crawl out of my nearly two-year Internet hibernation to understand what seems to hold our entire generation in complete captivation all the time. As such, this is an Internet Analysis from eyes that are both cynical and utterly fascinated.

Kim & Kanye Are Divorcing

This is easily the biggest event in pop-culture history in quite a while. Kim Kardashian and Kanye West, long seen as two of the biggest icons in a Hollywood world that values vanity and temporary solutions, seem to be nearing the end of their relationship. According to various sources, Kim and Kanye's relationship is on life support. Tensions between the two have been strained since West's run for president, which Kardashian had strongly advised against. The couple has even stopped going to marriage counseling, long a hallmark of Kardashian and West's honest relationship. More drama will be revealed, inevitably, through Kardashian's show, Keeping Up With the Kardashians, which will be in its 20th and final season this year. What better way to detail the issues of a divorce than through a lucrative reality television show?

However, West himself does not seem happy with the divorce, appearing to want to work things out with his wife. What will become of the two? Tune into this season to discover divorce done by reality television.

The Bachelor

Yet another symbol of the growing world of reality television, The Bachelor has been making some major headway recently. As a result of this summer's Black Lives Matter protests, the show decided to feature its first African-American suitor, Matt James. First making an appearance on Clare Crawley's season of The Bachelorette, James has been a fan favorite ever since. The real estate agent, entrepreneur, and former Wake Forest wide receiver hopes to find the love of his life among a cast of women who compete for his affections.

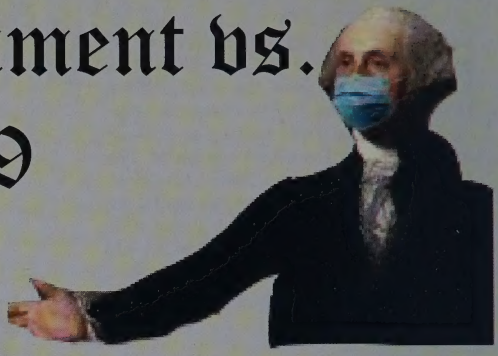
Joshua Bassett and Olivia Rodrigo

Oh, yes. The drama that has completely taken over TikTok in the last two weeks and catapulted Rodrigo's single, "Drivers License," to numerous streaming records on Spotify. Both of these achievements occurred precisely because of the song's backstory, which makes it all the more intriguing to an outside observer who has no connection to any of these people.

So, an intro to the drama. Joshua Bassett and Olivia Rodrigo are two young actors who gained prominence after starring in the Disney+ television adaptation of High School Musical. The star-crossed lovers apparently fell in love on set, with Bassett writing a song for Rodrigo to indicate the true level of his commitment (this becomes important later). Although the relationship was ethically questionable and was subsequently kept under wraps--he was 20 and she was 17--things seemed to be going well for the new couple. That is, until fellow Disney actress Sabrina Carpenter came into the picture. Reportedly, Bassett began a relationship with Carpenter while he was still with Rodrigo, leading to a crestfallen Rodrigo writing a bitter "Drivers License" to illustrate the pain that she was going through. Fans have jumped on lyrics like "you're probably with that blond girl" and "Guess you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me" to surmise that the song details her doomed relationship with Bassett.

Although these rumors remain unsubstantiated, there's still plenty of drama to go around. Seemingly in response, Bassett released his new song, entitled "Lie Lie Lie." He claims that the song is about his former best friend, but many fans and drama observers are skeptical. At this point, this situation just serves as yet another reminder of the power of TikTok to make things go viral, and the ability of an entire generation to air out the dirty laundry of a young couple.

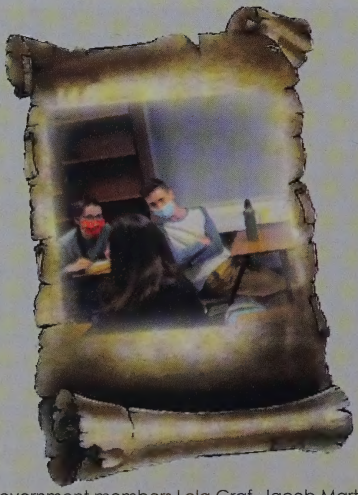
Student Government vs. Covid-19



written & designed by
KAIYA CRONKHITE

What has student council been doing all year? Students know they plan events and school fundraisers, but how has COVID-19 affected this and what are they currently doing? Layla Kelly (9), the freshman class secretary, discussed some common questions circling student council. COVID 19 has thrown student council events into turmoil, "Most of the events that we would plan in a normal year, like semi, have not been able to happen. We've had a lot less to do because there really isn't a safe way to incorporate the entire school into events" Kelly (9) said.

Student Council has been incredibly resilient and creative this year with all of the restrictions because of Corona, but what exactly are those restrictions? Health codes indicate that The face covering mandation, "Every individual within the state of Indiana shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when: inside a business, public building, or any other indoor space open to the public, or cannot maintain a social distance of 6 feet." (Holcomb 4, 2020). Of course the social distancing mandation, "Every individual within the state of Indiana shall maintain social distancing of 6 feet" (Holcomb 4, 2020). These general requirements make planning a lot harder as maintaining 6 feet in crowded school events would be nearly impossible.



Student Government members Lola Graf, Jacob Martin and Layla Kelly, discuss ways to have prom while following CDC guidelines

Following CDC Guidelines and keeping gatherings small, the student council is making informed choices to keep our school safe against COVID-19. If this was just a normal year without COVID-19 Layla says "the student council would plan lots of school spirit days and all the major events that students would normally participate in".

Due to these unique and trying circumstances they haven't had an opportunity to do most of this. The student council members may think their workload is currently slow at the moment but the responsibilities entailed with their jobs are very important to our school and community. "Normally, there would be a lot more to do, but right now, the most important aspect of being a student government member is being creative. This is such a crazy year, and creativity is the only way for us to make things work" Kelly said.

The creativity from our amazing student government shines through these events, like the amazing homecoming dress up week and new clubs introduced so far this year. Student council has done a great job of keeping up traditions freshman could have missed out on this year, and it's well appreciated.

A common misconception about student council is that they aren't currently doing anything just because the impacts aren't always visible.

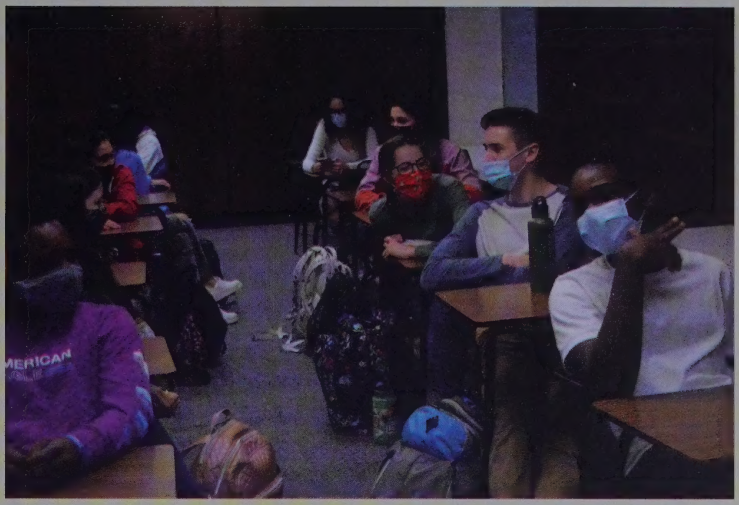
"Really, we're still working behind the scenes to keep all of the usual functions running smoothly." Kelly said. Freshman Secretary Lola Graf (9) is responsible for taking notes on what happens at council meetings. But due to COVID-19 this year the student council has only had a few meetings to limit large gatherings.

It's been difficult for the council to accomplish much since it's such a large group, they work with representatives from other grades to brainstorm ideas for activities.

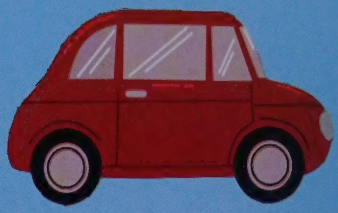
Both members of the student council I interviewed said that they would recommend student council to anyone who's interested. A major part of the student council is being involved with our school and our school community so if that interests you then you may want to check out the student council for next year's elections and things are hopefully back to normal again.

Whos Behind The Masks?

Pictured below in the right hand side is Carmella Gabriel and Nada Dahouk dicussing ideas for future plans with Yeyoon Song and Anthony Gery.



The Perils of Parking



Explore the disaster of parking: It never worked.

written and designed by
CLAIRE ELLIOTT

Though transportation has shifted from horses to cars, people's storage methods have remained the same. Rather than modern-day "parking," the first drivers merely stopped their cars wherever their destination was. In other words, parked cars lied in the middle of streets, on sidewalks, and really anywhere that is possible.

Believe it or not, this method had its flaws. Traffic grew like a cancerous tumor and sucked precious time out of the public's lives. Cities, trying to control the jamming streets, introduced bans and limits to parking . Like most bureaucratic solutions, unintended consequences soon followed. According to MIT Press The Reader, in 1920, when Los Angeles banned private automobiles from parking downtown, businesses' profits fell to detrimental levels. One even reported that profits were down forty percent.

So, parking is clearly necessary, not only for the sanity of drivers, but also for economic stability. However, nonfunctional parking (which is a frequent occurrence) poses a number of threats.

Perhaps the most obvious peril, the safety in parking lots is parallel to that of the unlawed and brutal ocean. Hordes of cars swim jaggedly past, all moving towards the same unguarded space. Exiting this frenzy, too, leaves the vehicle's flanks open to scrapes, T-bones, and fender-benders.

One of the worst parking lots in Fort Wayne is by Promenade Park. With a purely gravel ground, the lot has no designated spots, leaving parking up to the creative minds of the people. It is a disaster. Moreover, to enter the lot, one must overcome a full curb. Despite the "setbacks," though, the lot does do its job: provide places for cars to temporarily park.

Many of the parking lots in congested areas like downtown suffer from similar flaws.

"I have not encountered many parking lots but it definitely is impossible to park downtown and at Chick-fil-a," Jacob Scavo (11) said.

Unless it is a Sunday, Chick-fil-a tends to be one of the busiest sites in the entire Midwest. Their crisp yet tender nuggets are nearly irresistible. In fact, Chick-fil-a even shows up in the best "cheap-eats" in Fort Wayne.

Although they have an incredibly active drive-through, strengthened by the lack of dine-in seating, Chick-fil-a has a steady system in play. With only one exit, the line moves in an efficient, looped path. With little room to independently move one's car, Chick-fil-a selected angled parking.

Normally, angled parking is terrible, with narrowed lanes, uncertain turns and seeing your car-neighbor all too clearly. However, the Chick-fil-a's strict, one-way system creates the perfect environment for angled parking. Just slip out the line, angle in, and enjoy those nuggets.

Parking lots in more residential areas, too, are victims to poor planning and traffic.

"My church, pre-COVID, was super busy because everyone was trying to leave right after the service. There are only two ways out of the parking lot so it can get extremely congested," Amelia Hardin (12) said.

The condition of Hardin's church is one of the most common flaws in parking lots. "Bottlenosing" appears in big cities and small, claiming dominion over the people's valuable time. USA Today reports that drivers spend seventeen hours a year, on average, looking for parking spaces. Such a waste of time is not without its economic consequences.

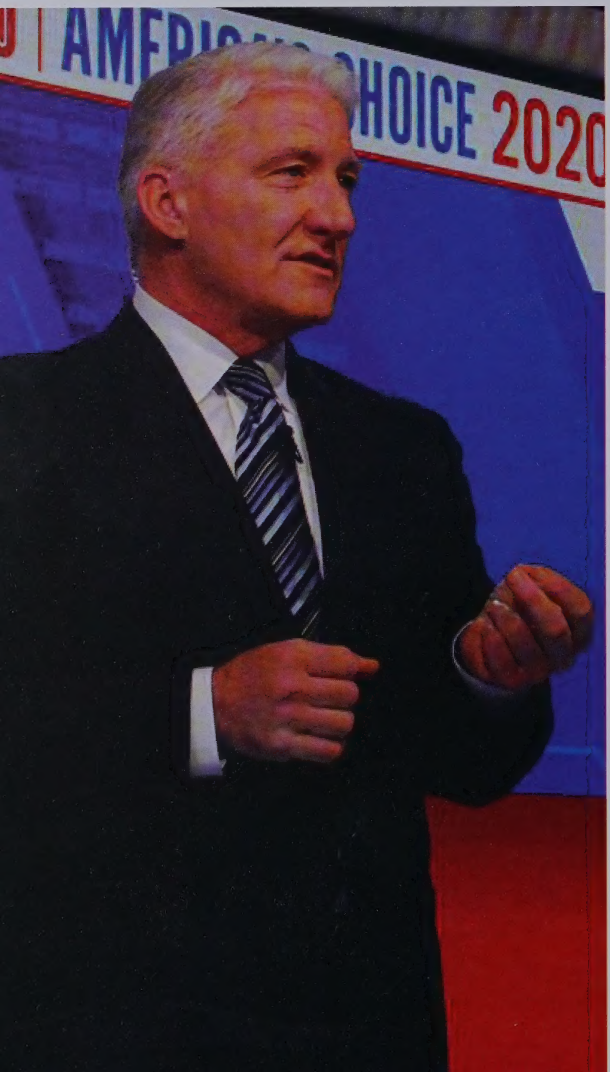
The worst part about parking lots, though, is quite obvious: the other drivers. To assume that people will retain their humanity and self-respect in such chaotic environments is utterly foolish. Take the Kroger on Coventry's parking lot, for example. Although there are multiple exits and more than enough spots, people will speed down the aisles leading to scratches, T-bones, fender-benders, and more.

Furthermore, this is just a grocery store, filled mostly with adults. Imagine a Friday afternoon with raging teenagers and overworked soccer moms.

Hidden Heroes of the Election

written and designed by
JULIA EPLING

On the night of November 3, as America watched their televisions with anticipation, two men were there for it all. Steve Kornacki and John King became voices of reason, soothing the nerves of the nation as they showed us the details of the election on their touch screens. As battleground states were waiting to be called days after the polls closed, Kornacki and King became the latest national obsession.



Kornacki is the national political correspondent for NBC News, while King is CNN's chief national correspondent. While they both have been journalists for many years, their work during the 2020 election brought them fame all over the internet.

Memes, fancams and "thirst traps" were all shared on sites like Twitter and TikTok. Fancams are video edits that are usually posted about K-Pop stars. An upbeat song plays in the background as spliced together images and videos of celebrities are shown.

#SteveKornacki and #JohnKing currently have 10 and 3.3 million views on TikTok, respectively. While Kornacki and King spent hours upon hours breaking down battleground states, their popularity skyrocketed.

They became America's comfort anchors, and naturally, the internet turned to comedy. King told the Los Angeles Times, he only slept 6.5 hours between Tuesday and Thursday. Kornacki, on the other hand, admitted that he stayed awake for 45 hours straight.

As America waited for the polls to close, King kept repeating that the election was playing out in a fair way, that there were no credible concerns with how votes were counted and this is what is done as a democracy. It was clear that his goal wasn't just to deliver information, but to protect the sanctity of the democratic process. During a tense time, his repeated reassurances were what everyone needed to hear.

Over the course of those intense few days, King and Kornacki were fair and precise in reporting where votes were coming from, what we did not yet know and what each candidate needed to do to win. They also insisted that every vote should be counted, regardless of which side they come down on. At a time when people were so on edge, they were the stability we needed.

Where King is seen as more mellow, Kornacki is full of enthusiasm, leaning over MSNBC's map board while explaining everything. And while his style is different from King's, he's no less trustworthy and kept his focus on what the numbers are telling us. His enthusiasm, and Gap khakis made him so popular that MSNBC actually started a Kornacki Cam for the superfans.

When the Georgia Senate runoff race results were being counted in January, America watched their favorite news anchors again. The races were between Jon Ossoff (D) and Republican David (R), and Raphael Warnock (D) and Kelly Loeffler (R). Once again, America tuned into CNN and MSNBC to watch Kornacki and King. Luckily, this go around was shorter than in November.

The race took place on January 5th, and it took a couple days to get the results. As King and Kornacki talked America through another election, their viewers were happy to see them on screen again. When the enough of the votes were counted, Warnock and Ossoff officially declared victory.

Tanya Chen ✓
@tanyachen

every john king needs a john queen

10:06 AM · 11/5/20 · TweetDeck

chrissy teigen ✓
@chrissyteigen

@SteveKornacki lol where are you are you okay

Jackie
@JDeMolee

May the universe always protect **Steve Kornacki**.

12:29 PM · 2/4/21 · Twitter Web App

Kristine Venice
@kristinemvenice

can we get **@stevekornacki** and @JohnKingCNN on the weather map? #SnowStorm2021

Mikey Likey
@michaeldeluca7

Amazon should start offering "**Steve Kornacki pants**." They'd make a fortune

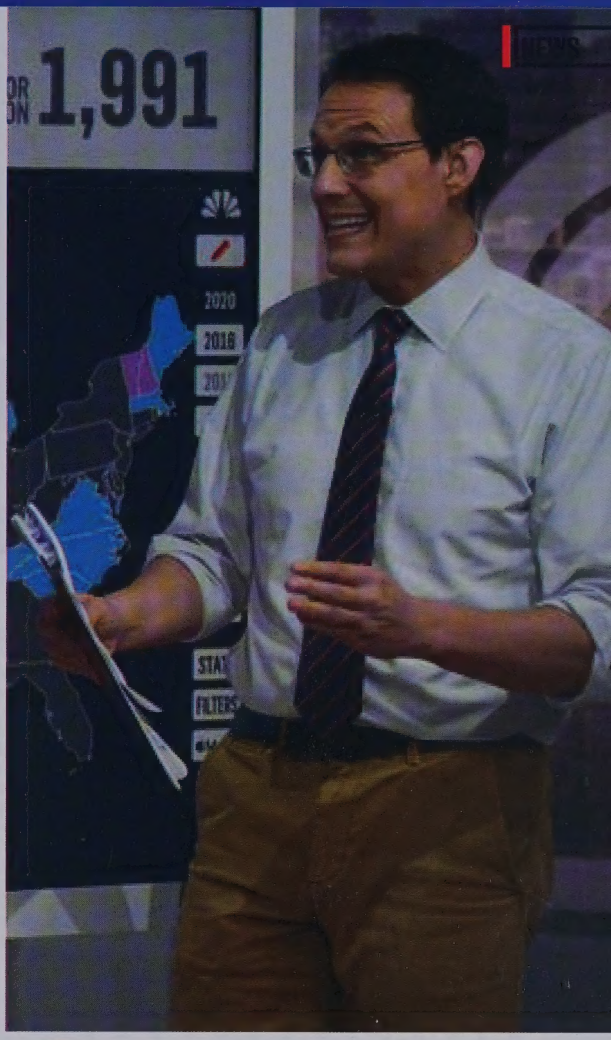
Matt Brennan ✓
@thefilmgoer

9:38 PM ·

Please, if you decide to profess your love for map kings John King, Steve Kornacki, et al., use the preferred nomenclature:

Chartthrobs

10:54 PM · 11/5/20 · Twitter Web App



David Mack ✓
@davidmackau

when will my husband, steve kornacki, return from war

@JohnKingCNN always tune in on **election** night to watch you break it down. Thanks for all the dedication and work. Often imitated, never duplicated.

Coolmath GAMES

Unblocked Games

Cool Math Games Word Search

O	D	T	R	A	F	F	I	C	M	A	N	I	A
W	D	O	H	Y	L	F	O	T	N	R	A	E	L
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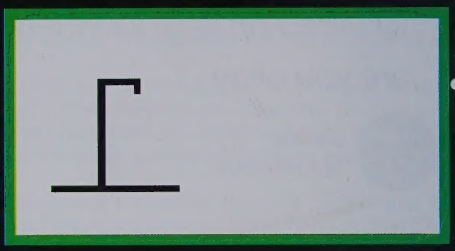
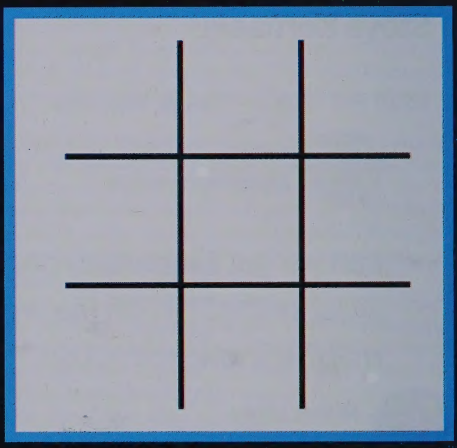
U	E	I	R	W	D	U	C	K	L	I	F	E	L

BOB THE ROBBER
TOWER DEFENSE
SPACE
LEMONADE STAND
LEARN TO FLY
WATER GIRL
RUN
CHESS
TRAFFIC MANIA
DUCK LIFE
RED BALL
HAPPY WHEELS
DOWN IS UP
REVERSI
CIRCLEOO
FIRE BOY
FREE CELL

Play this puzzle online at : https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1877615/





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hint: read the article to find the quote if you need help:)

Cool or Uncool?

written and designed by
MIKAYLA HAVISON

After racing through Rocket Math worksheets and crushing the competition in indoor-snowball, your favorite part of the elementary school day has finally arrived. Computer time. Whether it be from inside the claustrophobic chamber of one of the school's many computer pods, on a coveted classroom laptop or in the central computer room, it is guaranteed that computer time will be an electrifying experience. These feelings of elation, though, cannot be accredited to Compass Learning, Type to Learn or even KidPix. No, such enthusiasm for school can only be sparked by Cool Math Games.

For those who have not had the exquisite pleasure of venturing into the realm of coolmathgames.com, it is essentially a website that outlines basic math concepts, but more importantly, has a ton of games. From all the Duck Lifes to Fireboy and Watergirl, from Swing Monkey to Papa's Frizzeria, Cool Math has a timeless, puzzle-type game for everyone. The games on Cool Math are so timeless that even high school students continue to play them... or at least they used to.

While most students have a loving relationship with Cool Math Games, it is no secret that the website's relationship with administration and teachers is a bit less affectionate, maybe even hostile. Most semesters, the website flips from blocked to not blocked to blocked again, leaving puzzled students in its wake. Currently, Cool Math Games "is not available because it is categorized as blocked domains all students," as the error message reads.

"I suspect there are some educational activities in the site and there are some activities that aren't," Don Chase, the District Technology Coordinator, explained. "Our filter makes determination what it believes is best based upon the hundreds of thousands of users. So I suspect it flip flops based upon that data."

Although Cool Math Games may currently be blocked due to the nature of district filters, it is safe to assume that most administrators and teachers are not saddened by the circumstances, even with the math component of the site also being lost.

"We can override what our filter is blocking or not blocking," Chase said. "However, we can only block all or none of this site. So if part of the site has good educational material where some of the activities have no educational value, then we typically error on the side of blocking sites that aren't 100% educational in nature."

It is common for students to play Cool Math Games in class, which is one of the main reasons the website is blocked for not being educational; however, some students argue that playing Cool Math Games is the best of the internet's not explicitly-educational material.

"In my opinion, Cool Math Games has a minimal effect on learning in the classroom," Zachary Moorman (12), who highly recommends Run3 if the site ever becomes unblocked. "If someone doesn't want to pay attention they'll find something else to do, always have and always will."

Moorman is right. With the death of Cool Math Games at Homestead, students have simply gotten more creative with finding entertainment. Instead of playing a simple round of Nom Nom Yum, students have turned to less innocent and enjoyable forms of entertainment: pirating anime, playing chess online with strangers and plain-old sleeping just to name a few. Unfortunately, most alternatives to Cool Math Games are less academic, suggesting that the website's blocking may have made little impact on students' ability to focus in class.

"I don't think Cool Math Games should be blocked," Kobe Chen (12), a student who was accepted into Harvard this past December, said. "Students just turn to other inferior sources of entertainment. At least Cool Math Games has quality stuff."

But students turning to inferior, criminal and mundane forms of entertainment is not the only reason the school might want to consider unblocking Cool Math Games. Some of the games on Cool Math might be beneficial for students.

According to a study completed by Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, Cut the Rope, which mirros several games available on Cool Math, actually has the potential to improve executive functions. By the end of the study, players of Cut the Rope study could switch between tasks 33 percent faster, could adapt to situations 30 percent quicker, and could focus 60 percent better than at the beginning of the study. The study is only a glimpse into how Cool Math Games could positively affect students.

"In the future, with more studies, we will be able to know what type of games improves specific abilities, and prescribe games that will benefit people aside from just being entertainment," Michael Patterson, the researcher, told the University's publication.

Patterson's study is not the only one that suggests that there might be some underlying benefits to Cool Math Games.

In a compilation of 116 studies published in Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, several of the studies indicated that video games may not be as negative for people as some would lead them to believe. As noted in Medical News Today, participants who played video games had significant improvements in both selective and sustained attention, skills that are invaluable for school.

Of course, these improvements in attention mean nothing if students are overly focused on Cool Math Games instead of course work.

"I have not really noticed any impacts on academic performance other than focus," Layla Kelly (9) said. "People would rather be playing games than doing their homework.

If students play Cool Math Games during downtime in class or at home, then Cool Math Games might help the overall academic performances of students.

These theories in Cool Math Games and video games in general still need more research, but maybe, it is not quite time to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

"Bring back Cool Math Games, Dr. Ginder," Chen said.

The End of American Values:

Liberty, Independence and Responsibility

written & designed by
THOMAS HILL

"Give me liberty or give me death!" It was March 1775 when Patrick Henry made this bold proclamation, and the American colonies soon declared their independence as the American Revolution began. But let's back up to that crucial idea of liberty and independence, as the two are naturally and inseparably linked.

Without independence, there is no liberty and vice versa. And of course, independence only works if people are willing to take responsibility for themselves. That's why we don't see someone as independent until they have moved out from their parents' house and have their own source of income. If someone doesn't take personal responsibility for their life - which can include having a job, being able to provide their own food and shelter, etc. - then they aren't truly independent. True freedom and independence is only created when people step up and take control of their own actions.

However, even in America, the land of the free, the idea of personal responsibility is slowly breaking away from liberty. As Americans begin to ask the government to do more and more for them rather than doing it for themselves, the US is coming dangerously close to becoming a government-run nanny state (a country where the government is overprotective and interferes with personal choice), and the COVID-19 pandemic has brought that possibility closer than ever before.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has wielded unprecedented power by forcing businesses to stay closed, often under arbitrary and hypocritical guidelines. Despite this breach of liberty, most Americans are complacent enough to go along with these guidelines because it helps to absolve them of taking responsibility for their own actions and makes them feel like they are keeping others safe, even if it comes at the expense of their own livelihood.

"Parents will pay for [things] longer... so [young adults] aren't as responsible for themselves." - Makayla Henline (10)

While many would argue that the government's mask mandates and closing of businesses are necessary to keep the pandemic from getting worse, the threat of giving the government total control of our lives is greater. The decisions being made by the government should be choices made by each citizen after doing a personal risk assessment. For example, a business owner should be able to decide for him or herself whether it's worth it to risk opening up in the middle of a pandemic.

Ella Sackett (12) believes that "at first, (the government) did (take away personal responsibility) a little bit... but as of now, it's back to normal". In Indiana, this is true; however, other states, such as New York and California, continue to wield power over the individual responsibilities of Americans.

This mentality of giving up personal responsibilities to the ever-expanding government has stretched through every facet of American society, and even though the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the issue of personal responsibility front and center, the cession of responsibility has been going on for decades.

There are many ways in which people want to absolve themselves of responsibility for their actions, and one of the most blatant is the question of student debt. Student debt has become a huge issue in America, and many are in favor of "forgiving" student loans. However, this is a prime example of how Americans have lost the value of personal responsibility.

The people who took out those student loans made a conscious choice; they chose to borrow money in order to attend college and were fully aware that they would have to pay it back. However, they

no longer want to take responsibility for that choice they made. Instead, college graduates are turning to the government to "forgive" their loans.

Not only is it economically impossible for a loan to truly be canceled or forgiven, but this is a dereliction of these graduates' responsibility to fulfill the contract they entered.

Proponents of forgiving student debt argue that the massive amounts of debt are holding back an entire generation from reaching its full potential. However, I would counter that many who struggle with student debt have degrees in areas such as gender studies or queer theory, which may sound prestigious but don't actually help you get a job.

Additionally, it would be unfair to shift the burden of student debt onto the taxpayer. Why should someone who graduated from college 20 years ago and paid off their own student debt now be responsible for paying off someone else's? The same applies for someone who chose not to go to college. Why should they have to pay for someone who did want to take out a loan for higher education?

Makayla Henline (10) agrees that "it gives (college students) a sense of responsibility and a way to care for themselves" when they have to pay off the loans they signed on for. The government - and by extension, the taxpayers - should not have to pay off the loans that graduates willingly took. Sadly, student loans aren't the only place where people want to forego their responsibilities.

The lack of personal responsibility doesn't just affect those who lack the fortitude to pay off their loans. Because the government gets its money from us, the (future) taxpayers, any effort to take the responsibility of the individual as a group effort affects everyone. That's why the idea of a universal income program isn't just unreasonable, it's a key component in the end of personal responsibility.

A universal income program is a government program in which every adult citizen receives a set amount of money on a regular basis. While this sounds unsustainable- and has only ever been tried twice, in Mongolia and Iran for short periods of time before failing- many socialist/progressive members of the Democrat Party support it, including former presidential candidate Andrew Yang, former US Representative Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) and, of course, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY).

Other progressive Democrats, including Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), former Obama administration HUD Secretary Julian Castro and Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT), have all said that they'd be open to trying a universal income system.

"People are getting lazier and lazier and asking for handouts from anyone who [will] give them."- Ella Sackett (12)

Although there are many Democrats who support a universal income system, there are also some who are against it, as are most Republicans. The idea of universal income stems from the philosophy of socialism and has only recently made its way into the mainstream Democratic Party, certainly due to Americans' increasing desire to be absolved of responsibility for their actions.

Politicians in support of a universal income system often don't think about the long-term sustainability of a universal income system. While their intentions- to make sure everyone has the basic necessities to survive- are admirable, a universal income system would only encourage people to let the government provide for them rather than providing for themselves, and would eventually cause the American economy to collapse.

Both Sackett, a conservative, and Henline, a liberal, find a universal income system unfair and unlikely to succeed. Sackett said that "[the system] is 100% not fair" because it would give those who didn't work "free handouts", while Henline agreed that she "didn't think it [was fair]".

Despite holding many opposing views, both understood that a universal income would discourage people to work hard and to hold a job. The only reason that an idea as ludicrous as universal income has even been able to get a foothold in the US is due to the abolition of the value of personal responsibility.

Across the nation, people are giving up on taking responsibility for their actions because they don't want to have to put in the work of finding a job, repaying loans, and making their own decisions about their family's health and safety. It is essential that Americans take more personal responsibility and ownership of their actions. Yes, your actions have consequences, and yes, it is your responsibility to support yourself, not mine or anyone else's.

If we continue to allow the value of personal responsibility to vanish from American society, we will lose the more important and inseparable value of liberty as well. It is impossible for one to have true freedom, liberty, and independence when the government is making decisions and taking responsibility for and from you. It's time to step up and make the decision to be accountable and self-reliant.

The government's purpose isn't to make sure you live a comfortable life- that responsibility falls upon the shoulders of every individual American citizen. The truth is that with liberty comes responsibility, and if we want to keep our freedom, we have to be willing to take personal responsibility for our lives and our actions.

Spartana

Issue 6 March 2021

Celebrate Women's History Month with us by reading our feature story on page 14.

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Dear readers,

Welcome to our March issue! After all of the holidays in February, it seems like March is kind of a celebration lull, but we've got plenty of stories to prove otherwise! Also, stay tuned for some exciting changes to our website, hhsspartana.com, coming in the next few months.

In this month's issue, our feature story is a festive and empowering testament to trailblazing women in Indiana in honor of Women's History Month. Read about four women's accomplishments in their fields, as well as the history of the holiday and the movements that paved the way for women today. Keeping with the tradition that March is best known for, you'll see St. Patrick's Day in a new light after reading about the existence of leprechauns that have long been denied. You'll also find out about our new AND wizened Spartana staff members through a Meet the Staff piece on each member's favorite childhood memories.

Is your favorite part of spring the notion that you won't have to drive on ice anymore? Read on to hear about Spartans' adventures on the ice and why you should stay cautious. Also, in this issue, we'll catch you up on Spartan achievements in and out of the classroom, and you can hear Homestead teachers' thoughts on how the pandemic has affected their ability to reach their students. Stay tuned for a story on the new city improvement project that's set to put a soccer stadium in the heart of downtown Fort Wayne, which could bring high-level soccer teams to the city. And, for those looking to leave the city for college, one way you can prepare to meet new people is by joining groups of incoming students on Facebook, among other social media and messaging platforms. How well do they work, though?

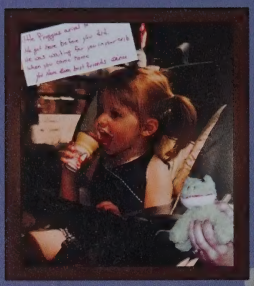
One unintended consequence of the polar vortex this year was the loss of electricity in many towns in Texas. Hear from Texas students about their experiences with the weather issues. Also, you'll read about how schools and students deal with mental health issues. Finally, the J List is back this month with a ranking of 8 well-known peanut butter brands, and the first edition of the Book Nook is here to provide you with all your new reading needs.

We hope you enjoy this issue! As always, please send us your feedback on our Instagram, @spartana_news, Twitter, @TheSpartana, and leave comments on our website, hhsspartana.com! Let's hope that the rest of March passes quickly, as spring break is right around the corner. Stay safe, Spartans!

With love,
June Hill and Emmalyn Meyer
Editors-in-Chief

Meet the Staff

written and designed by
EMMALYN MEYER



Mikayla Havison
Senior

This is Mikayla's fourth year on staff. She is one of the Editors-in-Chief. As a child, her go-to stuffed friend was a plush frog named Little Froggy, who still occupies her bedroom.

"Whenever I was having a bad day, I would tell Little Froggy stories about other frogs and we would both feel better," Havison said.

He played a large part in Havison's emotional support, even going through hardships of his own, like having his eyes chewed out by a dog. Although that was hard for her to witness, it brought them closer in the end. She still has Little Froggy today and can feel that he is there even if she does not actively seek him.

Emmalyn Meyer
Senior

Emmalyn has been on the Spartana staff for four years and is now an Editor-in-Chief. Her tried-and-true stuffed animals, a green bear blanket named Green Bebe, and a pink bunny blanket named Pink Bebe, brought her immense comfort as a child and still reside on her bed today.

"There was a third - a younger Pink Bebe that I called Baby Pink, but she was tragically stolen from me by someone in the changing room at T.J.Maxx when I was very young," Meyer said. "I literally have not stepped foot in a T.J.Maxx since."

Meyer's animal blankets kept her safe from the owl that may or may not have lived in her closet for many years.

"I was an extremely antisocial child, so it was nice to have adventures with my Bebes to attend to when I didn't have friends to hang out with," Meyer said.

June Hill
Senior

This is June's third year as a Spartana staff member. She is an Editor-in-Chief. Her favorite stuffed animal was Puppy, a puppy. Puppy provided constant emotional support to Hill everywhere she went as a child.

"I remember one time at preschool when I was about to trade him for an identical stuffed puppy and I might have actually gone through with it for a while," Hill said. "By the end of the day, I realized I was too attached to him and had to get him back."

Puppy remains in her room today, and although she does not see him as frequently as she once did, she takes comfort in his quiet presence.

"I brought him everywhere," Hill said. "Now, he's in my closet and I know he's watching over me."

Claire Elliott
Junior

This is Claire's second year on staff. Her two favorite toys as a child were a golden retriever Pillow Pet named Ruf Ruff (spelling was stylistically changed) and a small wind-up rubber chipmunk named Chicky.

"I was a creative child," Elliott said, "and sometimes offensive."

Her parents hated Chicky, despite the love that Elliott and the chipmunk shared. She refused to let go of him from her hand, as she was prone to losing chipmunks frequently.

"I had many iterations of Chicky, including Chickette, who I found in the grass," Elliott said. "I would lose one, and then it would show up out of nowhere."

Elliott firmly believes that when she cuts the tag on a stuffed animal, it comes alive.

Julia Epling
Senior

This is Julia's third year on staff. When she was a child, her Eeyore stuffed animal, which she asked her parents to buy for her when they went to Disneyland.

"I kept asking for them to buy it for me all week, and on the last night, I basically forced them to get it for me," Epling said.

As a child, Eeyore helped her feel comfortable when she slept by him during thunderstorms. She still has Eeyore today, but his active presence in her life has decreased over the years.

"He's hiding in my closet somewhere right now," Epling said. "Maybe one day he'll come out."

Elyssa Huff
Senior

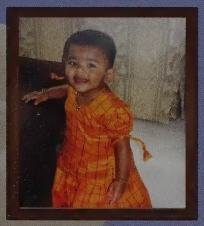
This is Elyssa's third year on staff. Her favorite childhood stuffed animals were a bear and dog blanket - Bear and Dan, respectively - both of which were pink. They brought her comfort when she used them to help her sleep.

She recalls the numerous times she begged her mother to resew Bear's paws after they were destroyed by a dog. Oftentimes, she was a part of the sewing process.

"I would say, 'No! We have to save them!'" Huff said.

Today, Huff does not see much of Bear and Dan, but they remain dear to her heart. Also, she desires to own a goat.

Ganga Subramanian
Sophomore

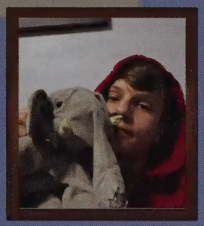


Ganga has been on staff since the fall semester of this academic year. As a writer, designer and reporter, she enjoys divvying her time between the three.

She had a favorite teddy bear when she was younger, and she recalls dragging it around the house as a constant comfort.

"I don't really remember my childhood," Subramanian said. "The teddy bear was probably there to support me emotionally, but I don't remember."

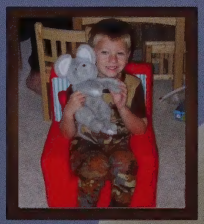
Luke Land
Sophomore



Luke has been on the Spartana staff for a year. As a child, his favorite stuffed animal was an elephant named Big Bird after the character on Sesame Street. Big Bird brought him comfort and protected him from his biggest adolescent fears.

"I can remember that I had to have him in order to sleep," Land said. "I was really scared of the dark so he helped me feel safe when I slept."

Thomas Hill
Sophomore



Thomas is in his first semester as a staff member. His most prized stuffed animal as a child was an orange elephant named, "so originally," as he puts it, Orange Ellie.

Orange Ellie comforted Hill through nightmares and was a constant reassuring presence in his childhood. However, a time came when he needed to get rid of it at a garage sale, and when he placed Orange Ellie in the "free" box, thinking no one would take it, it was only taken more quickly by a young girl.

"Today, when I'm reluctant to give something up, I remember how happy Orange Ellie made that little girl and resolve to let go of whatever I'm holding onto because it could help someone else more," Hill said.

Weldon Rodocker
Junior

This is Weldon's first semester on staff. His most memorable stuffed toy as a child was a tomato named Tomato Tommy.

"I remember my brother gave me a black eye because he threw it at me one time when I beat him at some video game," Rodocker said.

While Tomato Tommy was not an emotionally supportive companion, he provided plenty of childhood entertainment for Rodocker.

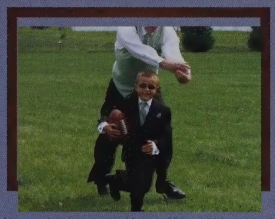
Madeline Phuong
Sophomore

This is Madeline's first year on the staff. Her cherished stuffed animal as a child was Rainbow, a rainbow dog, "like from Blues Clues, but more colorful."

Rainbow was very obedient and supportive of her various childhood whims, and she recalls fondly that he inspired her to be better every day.

"When my parents yelled at me for not eating my veggies, he was there," Phuong said.

Once, Rainbow suffered the fate many stuffed dogs face, when he was ripped apart by a real dog. Phuong sewed him back together with the aid of her grandmother, and though he feels more whole than before, he still looks lopsided as a result of the operation.



Jacob Houser
Junior

This is Jacob's second year as a Spartana staff member. He did not have many stuffed animals; rather, he had equipment from nearly any sport imaginable. He has strong memories tied to sports now because of the obsession he had with them as a kid.

"Specific memories, like playing backyard football almost every day in elementary school, or playing football at one of my dad's best friends' wedding with all of the groomsmen as a really young kid, still occupy their respective corners of my mind," Houser said.

A big part of why sports mean so much to Houser is the staying power that they have. They are also an easy distraction from life itself, and a constant source of entertainment that can bring people together in a way many activities cannot.

Kaiya Cronkhite
Freshman

Kaiya is in her first semester on staff. While she had "millions" of stuffed friends when she was growing up, she recalls one in particular that she spent a lot of time with. The name escapes her, but she remembers naming it something lamb-related.

"It helped me a lot because it was a stability in kind of an unpredictable home life and it was of course something that I could cling to all the time," Cronkhite said. "It helped a lot with my anxiety growing up."

Cronkhite still has the animal today and she still remembers the comfort it brought her.

"It's just in my closet, because I'm too attached to it to get rid of it," Cronkhite said.

Katelyn Styborski
Sophomore

This is Katelyn's first semester on staff. As a child, she favored an orange tabby cat named Amber, aka Momma Milky, as well as a smaller version of Amber named Milky - they were mother and daughter.

"One of my favorite memories is how she taught so many lessons to her children, mostly about being kind to others, even to bullies," Styborski said. "I played make-believe a lot as a child, and she was a great mentor character."

"Momma" offered wisdom and comfort when she most needed it.

"She was an outlet for my insecurities, as she served as a mature, adult figure who not only taught my other childhood stuffed animals, but myself as well," Styborski said.

Breaking the Ice

written and designed by
WELDON RODOCKER

Driving on ice is like taking a test you think will be easy but turns out to be impossible. No matter how confident in your abilities to drive on icy roads, something can happen to anyone. When ice is on the roads, there is always room for error. There are, however, ways to make driving on icy roads much easier.

If you drive a small two wheel drive car, unfortunately, the best advice you can receive is drive very slowly and be careful unless you are willing to put chains on your tires. Two wheel drive has less control than four wheel drive, as only 2 wheels receive power. With a combination of two wheel drive and less vehicle weight if you want to handle snow well if you are planning a winter road trip, you definitely should look for something other than a Honda civic.

Now, if you are driving a larger truck or a large vehicle with 4 wheel drive, don't let your big rig give you a sense that you are unaffected by the icy roads; however, both assets make you less vulnerable to the ice . With trucks having a higher weight than small cars, the tires have better traction. You also have the ability to easily put sandbags in the bed of the truck to increase the weight even more. Sandbags in the bed of the truck or in the backseat reduce the odds of fishtailing. And with the four wheel drive, the driver is able to equally distribute the power amongst the whole vehicle rather than the front or back half.

It's very easy to lose control on ice, and when it happens, your natural reflexes will take over, and in a short flash it's over. Humans' natural instinct when they feel they are no longer controlling the vehicle is to hit the brakes to stop and regain control. Unfortunately for us, that is the opposite of what you want to do. Rather than slamming the brakes, if you pump them, or hit them over and over again, you will have better results. But even if you know this is what you are supposed to do, your natural instincts take over when you have to think that quickly.

Many students from Homestead enjoy when the roads get slick - whether it is because it means a flex day or because it means they can go drift in an empty field. Most that engage in this activity are very careful and manage to Have a fun time without getting hurt.

"Driving on snow and ice isn't dangerous as long as you are aware of your surroundings. If I am driving and I know there isn't an object within 50 feet, I'm ripping her," Zao Wilkinson (10) said.

What Wilkinson says is true. The ice itself doesn't do damage to vehicles, it's the oncoming traffic, telephone poles, trees, etc.

"None of my friends crash or get hurt when we drive in the snow and it all goes back to being smart about what you do, if there's objects on the side of the road then drive smart but if you aren't close to anything no harm done," Tegan Elonzae (12) said, sharing a similar viewpoint that as long as you aren't hurting anyone and stay careful, it's easy to have fun. "You have to be careful, because if you stop paying full attention to driving on ice, that is when it goes bad."

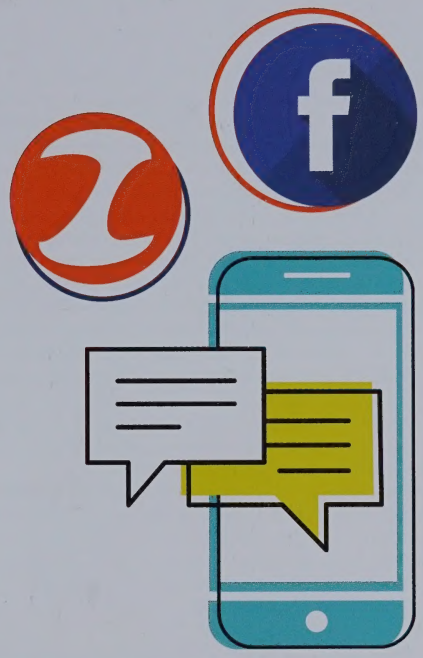
That is a great way to approach driving on ice. With your focus maintained on the road and driving responsible, any teenager can handle driving in Fort Wayne during the winter.

PHOTO BY ROBERT MORRIN

Tis the Social Season

College groups on social media aim to assist students in the next steps toward college.

written by
ELYSSA HUFF
designed by June Hill



There's no doubt that this year's seniors have had an incredibly rough time this year. With increased applications leading to decreasing acceptance rates, and a lack of availability for in-person college visits, the normal anxieties of choosing where to go to college have been amplified. Add nearly a year of quarantine and social isolation to the mix, and the prospect of heading to college and succeeding socially seems nigh impossible.

However, there are helpers for the journey. College groups on social media (like Facebook or the ZeeMee app) aim to assist students in the next steps toward college. In a difficult time of social connections, it's important to know that it is definitely possible.

"Early on, I joined the University of Chicago and Indiana University Facebook groups to try and meet new people. IU's 2025 page has about 6,200 members while UChicago's has around 900," Matthew Quintos (12) said. "While most of the meaningful social interaction will take place on campus, I feel like these groups are great starting points for meeting new people."

While these apps can maintain massive communities of prospective students, some of the groups are undoubtedly managed better than others.

"The actual quality of the groups and how helpful they are largely depend on the management. Some groups are official pages from the universities themselves and are inherently trustworthy and extremely helpful in finding other people. Others are student-created and poorly moderated, so you kind of have to be careful where you're getting the information from," Quintos said.

College groups can be greatly helpful in branching out of social bubbles, as it enables students to communicate beyond the Fort Wayne sphere.

"I've found a lot of people on the coasts who have (ZeeMee), and those are usually the people I end up talking to the most," Sydney Little (12) said. "I think I've only found maybe five or six people from Fort Wayne, so it definitely takes me out of my bubble a bit."

Even though a student can use these groups to get a feel for the nature of the student body, there are some concerns that student groups may not be indicative of the entire student population at a university.

"I think it's just like any other sample, where participation is voluntary and might not mean the entire population. There's probably a selection bias in that outgoing, social media-friendly students are more likely to post. While (these groups) can give an idea of the overall culture at the college, I wouldn't consider them the end-all be-all in decisions," Quintos said.

With the large numbers of people in these groups, however, come some risks. There are worries that students may be especially vulnerable to scams and false advertising here.

"IU's page had a 'guaranteed income' from Forex trading post," Quintos said. "It was clearly a scheme preying on vulnerable teenagers, but from what I could tell it was removed pretty quickly. You definitely have to keep your eyes open and think to yourself, 'If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is,' in these cases."

In light of these apparent scams (most of which occur on Facebook or Instagram), some groups are including extra steps for authentication to prevent these from happening.

"(On ZeeMee) before you can be added to the admitted students group for a certain college, the app requires a screenshot of your acceptance letter. It might seem kind of extra, but it gives an extra sense of security," Little said.

It seems as though online college groups can be an important way to meet new people and other potential students. Since college is home for the next several years of your life, this should be a very important factor for considering where to go.

"They're really good places to reach out to people and talk about how you feel with the whole college thing," Little said. "It's comforting to know that there are kids all across the country who are struggling with the same things you are."

GRAPHICS BY CANVA

Leprechauns and

written and designed by
CLAIRE ELLIOTT

Living in cities, rather than the suffocating intimacy of villages, proves valuable. Instead of conforming to the dominant culture, individuals can thrive as individuals with other individuals. Or, such uncommon beings can slink between people in the crowded streets, evading all notice and all suspicion.

It is important to note that slinking is astonishingly easier for those who dwell below five feet. Leprechauns are around three.

Moreover, magical qualities habitat those stout, somewhat round bodies. Their relative invisibility, then, is no surprise.
Yet so many complacent fools assume that Leprechauns are mere fiction, a censored celebration of the more jubilant holiday that adults partake in. That is, St. Patrick's day.

Originally, St. Patrick's day commemorated the death of St. Patrick, Ireland's patron saint. Soon enough, though, it became a national revelry of Irish culture.

In America, St. Patrick's day entails a sizable consumption of alcohol. The various liquors and brews, though, intoxicate the perception of reality in more ways than one.
While those of legal-drinking age and a collection of ambitious undergrads roam under a cloud of inebriation, the small yet fierce fey emerge, green and bright.

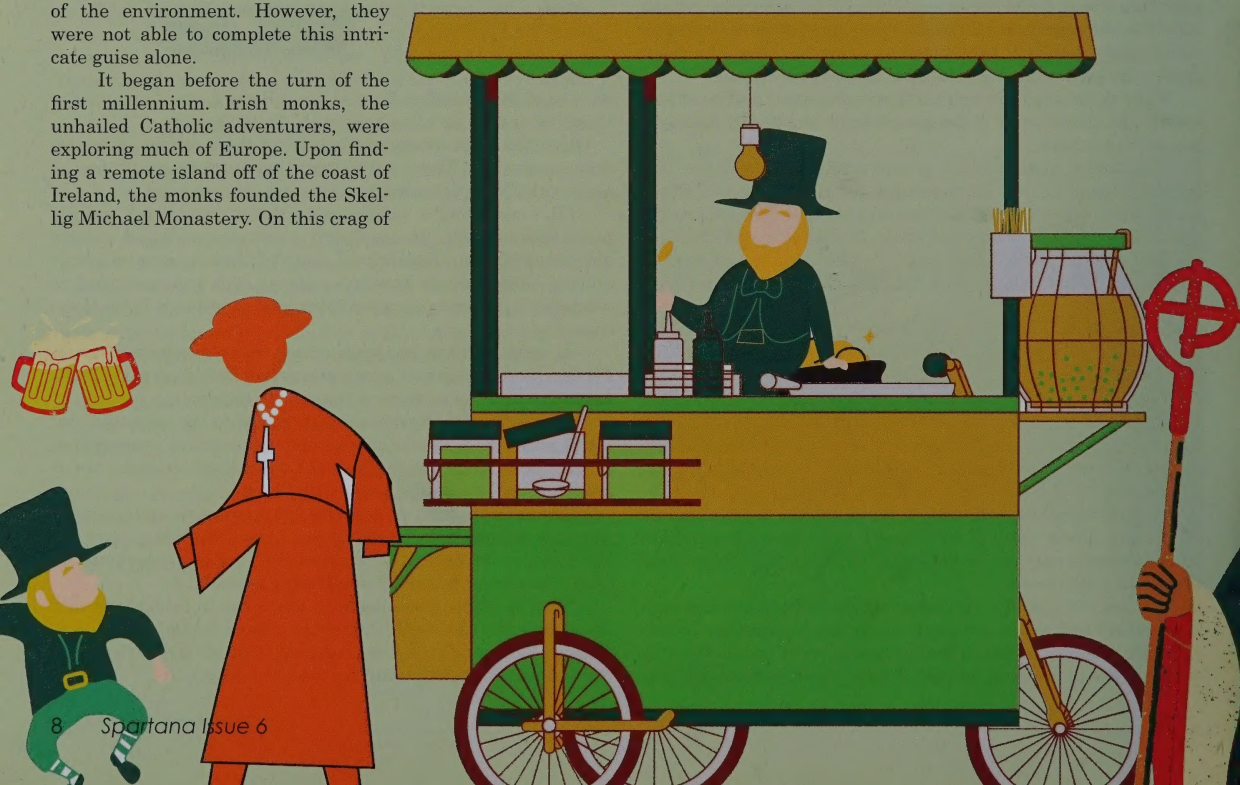
Leprechauns dwell in society, of course, but it is St. Patrick's day that they can take full advantage of the environment. However, they were not able to complete this intricate guise alone.

It began before the turn of the first millennium. Irish monks, the unhailed Catholic adventurers, were exploring much of Europe. Upon finding a remote island off of the coast of Ireland, the monks founded the Skellig Michael Monastery. On this crag of wilderness they met nature incarnate: Leprechauns.

Henceforth, the monks and Leprechauns formed a sort of alliance; the fey race craved integration into human society - a difficult task considering their distinct form. The monks, having a rather lonely profession, just wanted some company - and no company is as riotous and invigorating as that of the wily Leprechaun.

So, the monks introduced alcohol to Ireland, producing two ingenious entryways fortheir fairy friends. First, whenever a person would shout, "Look at that wee bearded man in the tree-trunk," his companions would only accuse him of drunkenness. Second, since all of the humans were erratically sauntering home from the pubs after dark, they often broke their own shoes. According to the Boots Society (BS), a global social club that investigates shoe happenings, 34% of shoe-breaks occur whilst intoxicated. Thus, the Leprechauns, skilled cobblers that they are, began covertly dominating the shoe-market of Ireland.

The fey's ambition did not stop there. Around 1737, an especially spirited Leprechaun named Gearoid started his own plot in America. He began the first-ever kiosk in Boston, selling shoes to passerbys. Now, other fellows had tried the kiosk-business before him, but no one could protect their profits from the



World Domination

thieves who operated the Boston streets. Since Gearoid hid his money under a cloak of electromagnetic beams, he was quite safe.

At this kiosk, the wee Leprechaun sold shoes. Because most of the Bostonians did not own mustangs, mechanical or biological, Gearoid's ware was in high demand. Crafty as he was, Gearoid began campaigning for a parade - a "celebratory walk," he called it. Unbeknownst to him, people require "reasons" to celebrate. (This is an absurd notion to Leprechauns, who are always up to for a jolly time.)

Recollecting his monk companions, Gearoid declared that St. Patrick's day was reason enough.

Since that pivotal day, the Leprechaun population in the US only grew.

"Once, three years ago, I had an encounter with Leprechaun kind. I was at Kroger, loading up the car with groceries, when I spotted a small man wrapped tightly in a hoodie standing next to his green Mini Cooper," Josh Greener (12) said.

Greener verifies that the individual was red-bearded with gold on hand. Such a sight drove Greener to begin luchorpanology (the study of Leprechauns). Awakened to the world around him, he now hears hammering and even songs in the woods.

"The slight hammering is accompanied by a working song. I have managed to record the chorus of the merry tune, and it goes something like this:

'Green and wise and charmed and wee
Working Leprechauns are we
Tap the nail, glue the sole
Woo the lass and charm her soul'

But my transcriptions are far from completed, their use of homophones makes interpretation difficult," Greener said.

There are other Leprechaun-believers, but few are as educated as Greener. Most possess infantile perceptions of the fey kind.

"If Leprechauns aren't real, then who trashed the classroom every St. Patrick's day during recess?" Colton Straub (12) said.

Teachers. By entangling their image with childish folly, the Leprechauns have slyly evaded human observation. Greener is laboring to overturn these erroneous perceptions.

"Too often we look at the world with our limited perceptions, and reject anything which does not conform to our preexisting notions of reality. If the existence of Leprechauns and fairy magic prove anything, it is the inability of modern society to accept the unknown. Even with the overwhelming evidence of their existence, many individuals are still Leprechaun deniers. To them I say this, when you walk through wooded vales and blooming gardens, listen for the sounds of giggling and fey sniggering. When you hear nature itself laughing at your ignorance, know that they are not laughing with you, but rather laughing at you," Greener said.

How are you Really?

written by
KATELYN STYBORSKI
designed by Kaiya Cronkhite

Even though 43.8 million adults struggle with mental health issues in a given year, there are only 577,000 mental health professionals practicing in the US today (Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.) In other words, there is one mental health professional per every 570 people in the US.

Amber Styborski claims, "everyone can benefit from therapy," whether or not someone has a pre-existing mental disorder.

Jack Kuchmay (10) agreed. "You don't need to suffer from mental health issues to get a therapist," he said.

Therapy is somewhat of a controversial subject, as there is a stigma that exists around mental health that argues that people who need therapy have something wrong with them. This stigma has kept many people from seeking the help they need.

"Therapy is nothing to be ashamed of. [...] Needing therapy does not mean you have something wrong with you; it just means you need help" (Amber Styborski). There is nothing wrong with reaching out to others to help you through negative thoughts.

Communication is vital to securing your mental state. Therapy is beneficial because it provides an outlet for negative emotions and promotes growth. Humans are social creatures. We need to interact with others to survive and to stay mentally stable. With the rise of the cases of Covid-19, the United States has been through two separate quarantines. This isolation has been detrimental to the mental health of the population.

Mr. Frazier, a health teacher at Homestead, claims that the lack of social interaction has caused him to suffer from more anxiety than he's ever had to deal with before. He is not alone with these feelings, as 18.1% of adults (approximately 40 million) and 7.1% of children aged 3-17 years (approximately 4.4 million) have diagnosed anxiety (CDC). This was before the Covid-19 pandemic.

To cope with these feelings, Mr. Frazier lets his emotions out through physical fitness, such as running. Channeling stress into something productive, such as exercise or reading, or creative activities, like knitting or painting or doing a puzzle, is an effective way to relieve stress.

The CDC also recommends taking a nap, drinking water, going outside, and participating in other methods of self-care. By promoting a healthy body, you also promote a healthy mind. Another way to reduce anxiety is to write down your feelings in a journal, or to tell someone else about it, as a form of self-therapy. The point is to find a way to release your stress without causing harm to yourself or others.

Depression tends to go hand-in-hand with anxiety. 3.2% of children aged 3-17 years (approximately 1.9 million) have diagnosed depression, according to the CDC. From there, 73.8% of children with depression also have anxiety. The Covid-19 pandemic has heightened these feelings of depression and anxiety, paired with the seasonal depression that comes with the winter months

Neurological disorders and mental health issues may make a person more susceptible to SARS-CoV-2. A study done by JAMA Network claims "a total of 458 participants (8.5%) had depression symptoms before COVID-19, and 382 participants (27.8%) had depression symptoms during COVID-19." Clinical depression needs an official diagnosis, but if you feel depressed for two weeks without end, or have constant feelings of hopelessness, seek medical attention for a diagnosis.

There's also a form of depression known as seasonal depression, which many people suffer from in the cold, gloomy winter months. Covid has made it even harder for people to cope with this seasonal depression, as they can't go out with others to escape the loneliness of winter.

Fortunately, spring is coming soon, and with that the days are getting brighter and warmer. People can start to take comfort in nature again. It is scientifically proven that sunshine benefits both one's physical and mental health. Go outside and clear your mind.

Isolation did not not stop at raising depression and anxiety rates. Covid has also increased the rates of those struggling with eating disorders. The main eating disorders are Anorexia,

which consists of a person starving themselves and overexercising to lose weight, and Bulimia Nervosa, in which a person binges and purges, consuming extreme amounts of food and then forcing themselves to vomit it all up.

"Eating disorders affect at least 9% of the U.S. population, or 28.8 million Americans, of which only 6% are medically diagnosed as 'underweight,'" says the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, or ANAD. This was before the Covid pandemic.

News-Medical cited a study in which 1,011 people were surveyed to figure out how COVID had affected their eating disorders. Both people with Anorexia and with Bulimia Nervosa claimed that quarantine had heightened their anxiety and caused their eating disorders to worsen. Those who were Anorexic claimed that they felt more "restricted" to find foods that were "in-line with their meal-plans," and those who were Bulimic reported that they "(experienced) more episodes of binge eating."

The NCBI warned that Covid "has the potential to increase need for healthcare services" while "reducing capacity for traditional [...] treatment options" at the same time. It is clear that Covid has caused more people to suffer from anxiety, depression, and eating disorders. The fact that there are less face-to-face options for people to get treated, is somewhat discouraging. However, people have found ways around it. Some people are now turning to virtual doctor visits and therapy sessions to keep themselves safe from the virus.

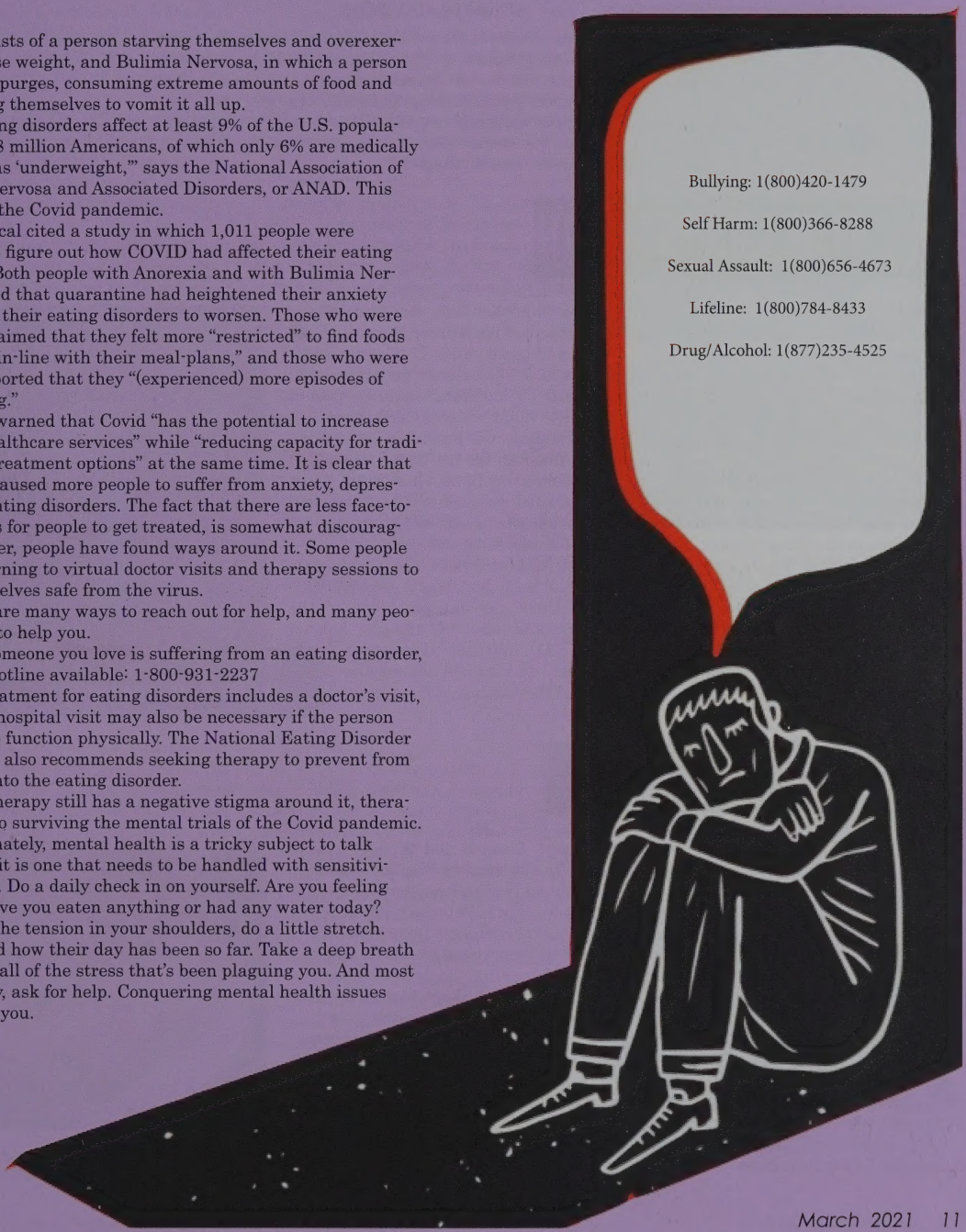
There are many ways to reach out for help, and many people willing to help you.

If you or someone you love is suffering from an eating disorder, there is a hotline available: 1-800-931-2237

Typical treatment for eating disorders includes a doctor's visit, in which a hospital visit may also be necessary if the person is unable to function physically. The National Eating Disorder Association also recommends seeking therapy to prevent from relapsing into the eating disorder.

Although therapy still has a negative stigma around it, therapy is vital to surviving the mental trials of the Covid pandemic.

Ultimately, mental health is a tricky subject to talk about, and it is one that needs to be handled with sensitivity and care. Do a daily check in on yourself. Are you feeling alright? Have you eaten anything or had any water today? Shake out the tension in your shoulders, do a little stretch. Ask a friend how their day has been so far. Take a deep breath and let out all of the stress that's been plaguing you. And most importantly, ask for help. Conquering mental health issues starts with you.



THE RUNDOWN

written and designed by
MIKAYLA HAVISON

March is a month notorious for academic competitions and awards. From college acceptances to competitions like Rube Goldberg, it feels like you can not go as much as a day without hearing about a student achieving something awesome. This story is a brief rundown of some (but certainly not all) achievements of Homestead students in the last few weeks. Make sure to tell these students congratulations if you see them in the hall!

LATIN COMPETITION

On Saturday, March 13, a group of Homestead Latin students attended the Indiana Junior Classical League convention at St. Luke Catholic School in Indianapolis. Both virtually and in-person, students participated in a variety of activities, ranging from a quiz bowl to creative art competitions.

By the end of the convention, the Homestead Latin students won several overall awards. One of the awards was third place in the Small School Sweepstakes, which was determined on the points won in individual events. The Latin students also received the fifth place Helen Wampler Spirit Award, which acknowledged the Latin club's dedication even when not competing.

Not only did the Latin club receive awards for the club, but individuals also received recognition for their hard work and Latin skills. This year, the six students who competed for Homestead received 25 individual awards. One of the most notable being Carly Chen (11) and Dominic Ud Dowlah's (11) second place finish in the Advanced Certamen, also known as Latin Quiz Bowl. Chen also earned a Graphic Arts Individual Achievement Award, as one of the top five students in her category.

The Indiana Junior Classical League also had a student board election. This year, Chen ran for president of the League and won. Additionally, Lauren Cabe (11), another Homestead Latin student, was named second vice president of the League.

First-place watercolor painting by Lauren Cabe.

POETRY OUT LOUD

For many students, the word "poetry" brings up less than desirable memories of analyzing Shakespeare sonnets in class; however, for a select group of students, poetry holds more fond memories.

June Hill (12) is one of those students who has a love for poetry. But Hill does not just love to read poetry. She loves to speak it.

After memorizing two poems and reciting them to a panel of judges, Hill won the school Poetry Out Loud competition and advanced to state.

"(I memorized) 'Dust' by Dorianne Laux, 'Backdrop Addresses Cowboy' by Margaret Atwoods and 'Epistle to Mrs. Tyler' by Christopher Smart," Hill said.

After submitting her poetry recitation videos to state in February, Hill recently found out that she got third place.

"I was very excited about the results," Hill said.

In the future, June has no plans of falling out of love with poetry.

"I would like to do some more recitation stuff in college," Hill said. "I don't know if I am very good at writing poetry, but I would love to recite other people's poems."

PHOTO BY EMMALYN MEYER

Picture of June Hill, the second runner-up at the state Poetry Out Loud competion.

RUBE GOLDBERG TEAM

Pouring a box of nerds is fun but pouring a box of nerds, while also taking a farmer on a quest to slay a dragon... now that is more fun. It is also exactly what Homestead's Rube Goldberg team set out to do over the last few months.

If you have never heard of Rube Goldberg, it is essentially a competition where schools compete to find out who can create the most interesting and creative machine.

"The mission of Rube Goldberg is to complete a simple task with as many drawn-out and creative steps as possible, while at the same time creating a story to give those steps meaning," Jose Guzman (12), the president of the Rube Goldberg team, said.

Every year, the team chooses a different story for their machine.

"This year our task was to shake and pour a box of nerds, and so our story was about a 14th-century farmer who goes on a quest to slay a dragon," Guzman said.

On March 10, the Rube Goldberg team submitted a video of this year's machine to be judged.

"For the virtual competition, each team had to upload a "team page" on Rube Goldberg's website with our step list, close up photos of the machine, a story presentation, and multiple videos of the whole machine and our favorite parts running," Guzman said.

On April 7, voting for the machine will open and a video of the machine will be available to the public. As soon as it opens, Homestead students and staff should definitely check the machine out. It has numerous steps and an adorable set-up featuring three landscapes. With such complexities, it makes the viewer curious as to how the group built the machine.

"We use a lot of wood, fishing wire, metal eyelets, mouse traps and PVC pipes, because they can be turned into or used for any step we want," Guzman said. "Luckily, the school was about to throw out several old wood palettes so that got donated to us."

The Rube Goldberg team will receive their results no later than April 17. For a sneak peek of the machine, head to hhsspartana.com.

PHOTOS BY JOSE GUZMAN

The Homestead Rube Goldberg machine can be seen in action at hhsspartana.com.

NATIONAL MERIT

During their junior year, students are required to take the PSAT. While the PSAT provides a good practice testing experience for all students, the test has some extra benefits for students who perform well. These benefits include recognition and best of all, money.

Each year, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation names just over 1% of junior test-takers as National Merit Semifinalists. Students who receive recognition then fill out a brief application in hopes of advancing to finalist status in the competition.

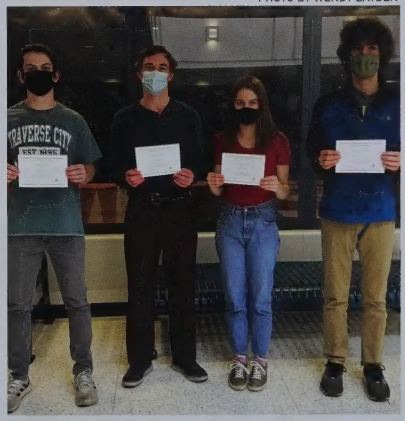
This year, four Homestead students were named National Merit Finalists. The students are Jack Gardner, Mikayla Havison, Matthew Schuler and Luke Sheppard.

Because there is such a long waiting time between taking the PSAT (November of junior year) and receiving notification of finalist status (February of senior year), the award came as a surprise to several students.

"I am honored to have been named a National Merit Finalist," Jack Gardner, one of the National Merit Finalists, said. "I honestly forgot about the PSAT, so I was surprised when I got the award."

These students will now be elidgible to receive scholarships from National Merit, companies and colleges who seek National Merit Finalists. If students accept a scholarship, they become National Merit Scholars.

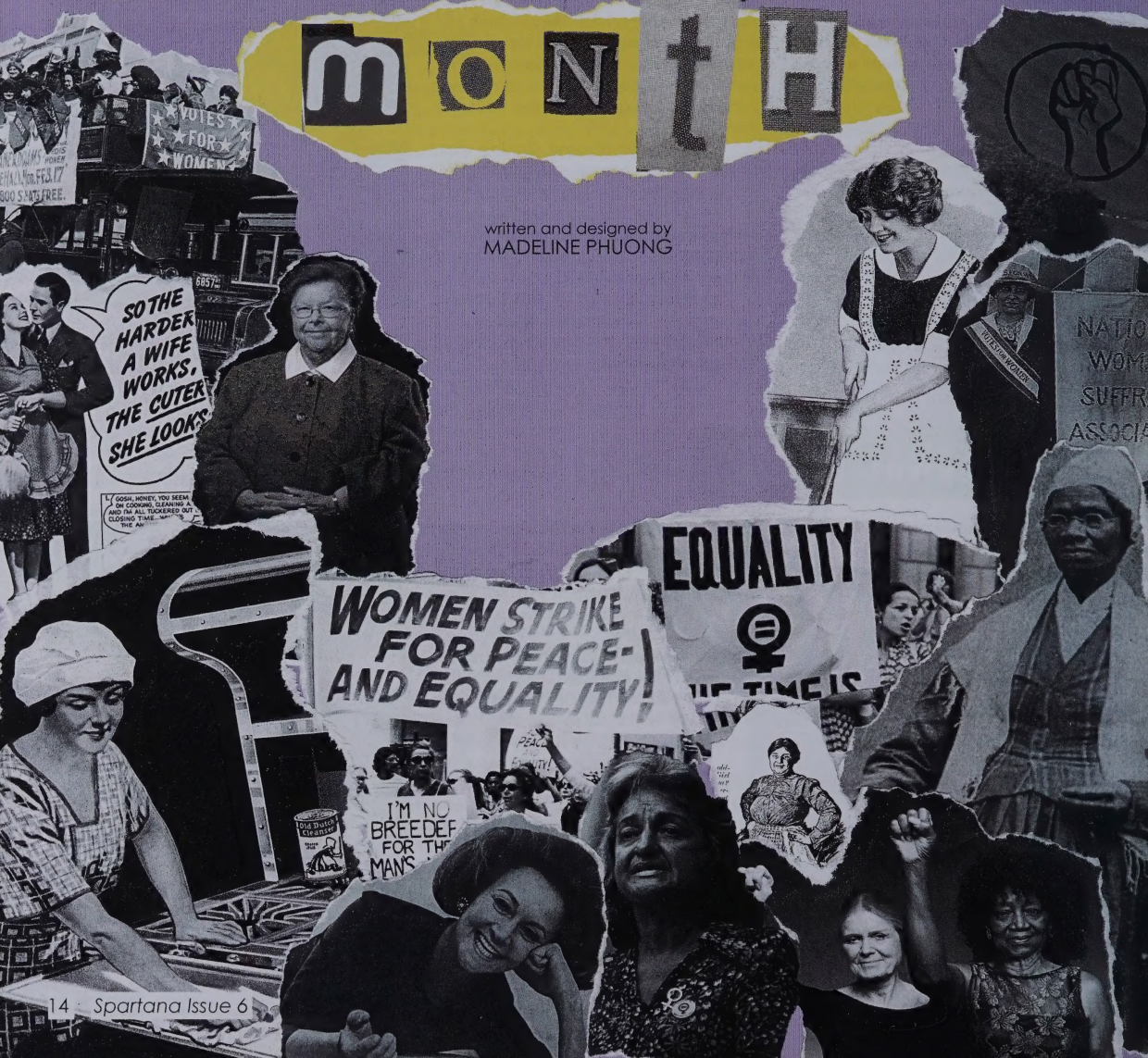
PHOTO BY WENDY LAYDEN



From left to right: Jack Gardner, Luke Sheppard, Mikayla Havison and Matthew Schuler.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG



Amid the March Madness craze for basketball and the growing dread of Tax Day, one vital celebration is too often disregarded: Women's History Month. This annual declaration is centered around International Women's History Day on March 8.

On a national level, Women's History Month originated from a push by former Representative Barbara Mikulski and former Senator Orrin Hatch to designate the week of March 8 as Women's History Week. Their actions came to fruition in 1987 when Congress declared March as Women's History Month.

The transition of women in American society from domestic to public life is rooted in gradual historical change. From the 19th century ideal of the cult of domesticity to the 20th century achievement of female suffrage, the past centuries are witness to vast developments toward gender equality. Women fought for opportunities of higher education and careers in politics, law and business. Despite this, past inequities have persisted.

"I do feel that women are not viewed as equals in certain industries - and that shows up in the wage gap," Advanced Placement United States History teacher Kara Squires said. "One of the things that continued (through history) was the dichotomy of being a woman, where there's that balance between career and family. That's a continuing role conflict that women have."

The role conflict between history maker and homemaker was a familiar one to women first entering professional roles. Revealingly, it is still one that women face today. According to the Center for American Progress in a March 2020 report, the average woman earns 82 cents for every dollar earned by the average man. While 18 cents may not seem like much, it can quickly add up: a woman with a full-time job could make an annual salary that is over $10,000 less than a man with similar credentials.

Beyond the imbalance in wages, women are also faced with overcoming social stigmas when entering what were, at the time, male-dominated fields. Squires noted one such leading figure to be Washington Post publisher Katharine Graham, who ran the newspaper during the 1970s Watergate Scandal.

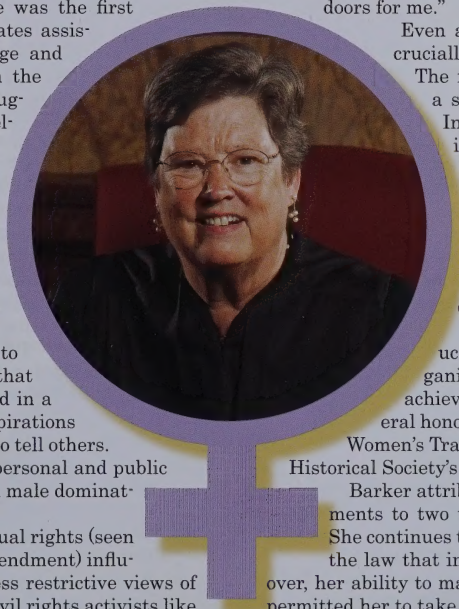
"Her story is really one that touched me in that she was a major trailblazer for women in what was a 'man's world' in publishing and news at the time," Squires said.

Closer to home, Indiana has seen exceptional female leaders in all fields. What follows gives insight into the successes of four Hoosier women who are living legends and current leaders. Pioneers in public service, politics and law, each has worked to create unique versions of groundbreaking herstory.

JUDGE SARAH EVANS BARKER

"History is supposed to teach us things. It doesn't stop just because it's a thing of the past - it's supposed to inform the future," Judge Sarah Evans Barker said.

Barker never planned the pioneering path of her career - one in which she was the first woman to be a United States assistant attorney, federal judge and chief judge in Indiana. In fact, when the idea of entering law school was first suggested to her by close friend Arden Mueller, Barker was taken aback.



"I didn't know any women who were lawyers. I didn't know women went to law school. It seemed to be off limits, sort of something that was out of reach," Barker said. "If she had said I ought to be an astronaut, it wouldn't have seemed any more far fetched to me."

Nevertheless, Barker soon aspired to go to law school, attracted by the idea that she could make an impact on the world in a meaningful way. Knowing that her aspirations were uncommon, Barker was hesitant to tell others. She recalled having to overcome both personal and public doubt of her ability to succeed in such a male dominated field.

Opportunely, the ongoing push for equal rights (seen in the debate over the Equal Rights Amendment) influenced the general public to embrace less restrictive views of female roles. American feminists and civil rights activists like Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem further encouraged support for women to more fully take part in public and civic life.

"It broadened our understanding of the importance of women participating as full and equal citizens," Barker said, contrasting the period with prior confinement of women to domestic roles. "I was fortunate because there were men who were in positions of responsibility and power who thought it was appropriate to expand the opportunities of women, and they opened doors for me."

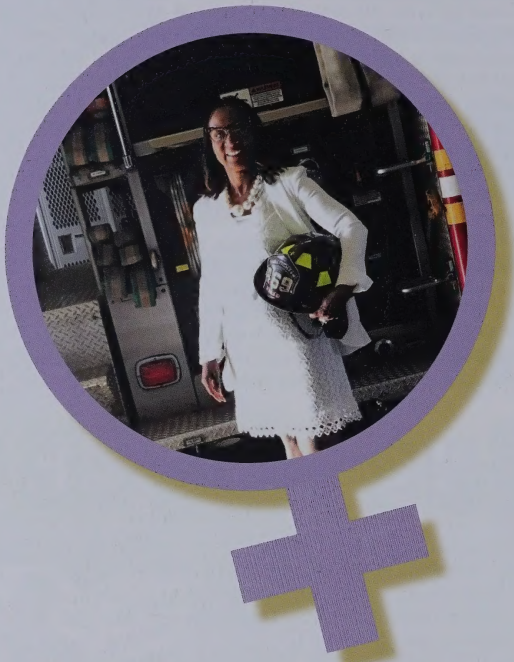
Even as doors began to unlock, Barker was crucially left with few guiding female figures. The nature of her position was founded in a shortage of other female professionals. In addition to the uncertainty of success in the legal field, Barker had to learn to balance her professional and personal lives, as she was also a wife and mother. Her establishment of the networking group The Gathering, in which female professionals socialize four times a year, in the 1980s helped other women do the same.

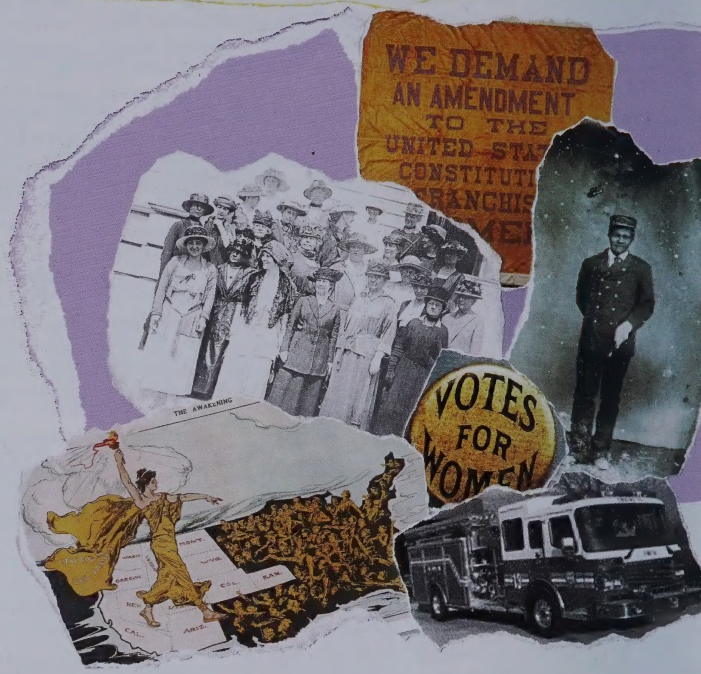
A member of numerous civic, educational, cultural and religious organizations, Barker's groundbreaking achievements have been recognized with several honors, such as the Indiana Commission for Women's Trailblazer Award in 2008 and the Indiana Historical Society's Living Legend Award in 2010.

Barker attributed her past and present accomplishments to two things: her passion and her foresight. She continues to maintain the same boundless love for the law that initially sparked her legal career. Moreover, her ability to make decisions for her long-term success permitted her to take advantage of later opportunities.

"You have to trust your own abilities and your own instincts and your own sense of self," Barker said. "Those are factors that will keep you on the cutting edge of an interesting life."

GENOIS BRABSON





"A lot of people did not expect me to be successful," Genois Brabson said. In 1975, Brabson became the first female dispatcher at the Fort Wayne Fire Department. At the time, the only other woman hired by the department was the secretary. Four years later, Brabson entered the department's training academy and made history as the first sworn female firefighter in Fort Wayne.

"Just think: for over 100 years, the (Fort Wayne fire and police) departments had gotten away with not having women apply. They figured that the dispatcher and firefighter positions were just a 'man's job' and they wanted to keep the pay scale a certain way," Brabson said, noting that her addition to the department was part of a national movement pushing fire departments to hire women. "I don't think they even thought about (reaching gender equality) like that at the time. They were just interested in how we can be modern."

When offered the opportunity to enter the fire department training academy, Brabson did not hesitate. She took the job and "never looked back." Within the course of a decade, she graduated from the academy, worked as a fire educator and inspector and eventually the fire education director. Additionally, she was President of the Black Firefighters Association.

Originally wanting to be a teacher, Brabson always held an interest in public service and social work. She fulfilled this goal during her time as the department's fire education director, when she took the opportunity to establish and train a team of fire safety presenters. Her proudest accomplishment was the creation of fire safety programs aimed at preschoolers and the hearing impaired. Additionally, she and her team paved the way in supplying smoke detectors to locally disadvantaged homes.

During her time at the department, Brabson received several accolades in recognition of her trailblazing. These include the YWCA Women of Achievement Award in 1986 and being named the American Legion Firefighter of the Year in 1990. Brabson was the first female African American recipient of the latter.

Looking back, Brabson observed that the department was slow to make adjustments as it hired more women. Without a mentor, she faced various physical and mental obstacles alone, including rigorous physical training in which injuries were common and the assumption of firefighters not making it out alive during emergency situations. Women who initially followed in Brabson's footsteps did not fare much better, as Brabson recalled the lack of department guidelines for female academy trainees who were pregnant or overweight.

Now, over four decades later, the Fort Wayne Fire Department has 12 female firefighters in a department of 349 sworn firefighters. Deputy Chief Adam O'Connor reported that, in the last application process, approximately 5.7% of applicants were female. In the 'Career Opportunities' page on its website, the department recognizes the increasing number of women entering the public safety field, providing resources which give "a glimpse at the day and the life of a firefighter."

"It is very heartwarming (to see more women at the fire department)," Brabson said. She is "so warmed and humbled" knowing that she continues to serve as a role model for local firewomen.

COUNCILWOMAN SHARON TUCKER

"Throughout all the other 11 months of the year, we don't elevate women in the way that we need to," Councilwoman Sharon Tucker said. "And I say that realizing that, without having a month to be celebrated, (women's history) probably would be washed away completely."

Tucker represents the 6th District on the Fort Wayne City Council, where she is the first African American woman to hold the seat. Similarly, during her five years on the Allen County Council, she was the only female and African American Democrat on a council of all white men. Her career in civic engagement began with the Allen County Democratic Party, for which she served as Treasurer and later Vice Chair.

Much like with the notable absence of female mentorship at the Fort Wayne Fire Department, there were few figures to support Tucker during her entrance into the realm of politics. An encounter with a man filled with blind hatred during a campaign parade prompted her to make change for women who would come after her. She founded the Woman in Politics Forum in 2012.

"That was the turning point for me: I was going to help women get through that kind of ignorance. I wanted to be the one who removes that barrier for all women who want to get involved in politics because I truly, truly believe that we are better when we bring all the voices into the conversation," Tucker said. "We have to be able to protect ourselves, and there is a way to do it without degrading yourself and without allowing someone else to disrespect you. That's what I want to help women understand."

Through the annual forum, Tucker advises female political campaigners and speaks on the importance of empowering women in politics. She aims to create a community of safety and support. In particular, she hopes to address the fear which often fuels opposition to the inclusion of all voices in matters of importance. Furthermore, she emphasizes the necessity of sharing roles of power to ultimately achieve diversity.

Often the only woman in the room, Tucker brings much needed diversity of thought to council tables with a "limited sphere of experience." The absence of diverse interests in county and city councils is prominent, as the same people - mainly white men - are continually chosen to be on city boards and committees.

"When we have people at the table making decisions without that berth of experience, then you get exactly what we have right now," Tucker said. "We can be more intentional to pick people that don't look like our normal picks, and, if they do look like our normal picks, then we want them to be sensitive to the needs of others."

Of her own experience with representing one of the most diverse districts in Fort Wayne, Tucker chooses to be aware of her community's needs by connecting with people. She expands her awareness of those she represents, overcoming everyday obstacles like language barriers. Tucker fulfills the principle objective tasked to every elected or appointed public official: speaking to and for her community.

FAITH VAN GILDER

"a feminist is just somebody who wants to see equal treatment and gender equality in every place where important decisions are made," Faith Van Gilder said. "I celebrate the progress that we are making, but we still have much room for improvement."

Van Gilder, who is one of the four co-founders of the Advancing the Voices of Women (AVOW) organization and the Marketing and Development Chief Officer of Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana-Michigan, considers herself a feminist. Her advocacy for equal treatment permeates her roles of leadership at both organizations.

AVOW first began after observing the growing incivilities of public discourse seen during the 2016 presidential election. The AVOW co-founders strove to create an environment in which women and men are comfortable having difficult conversations on polarizing political topics. They wanted to help all people learn to respect, if not entirely agree with, opposing viewpoints. They organized regular public guided discussions called Civil Conversations, which provides common ground for people from different backgrounds. The discussions are recorded and broadcasted on WBOI, and occasionally featured in local media outlets.

Another way in which AVOW promotes the voices of women in public life is through a weekly Women's Opinion column in The Journal Gazette, a sponsor of the organization. The local newspaper noticed that nearly all people sending in letters to the editor and op-eds were men.

"We wanted to change that and make it a more equitable male-to-female ratio. We try to have a very diverse group of women's voices - diverse as far as age, ethnicity, background and religion. Many of the women had never been published before," Van Gilder said. "We now are at the point where some women submit their op-ed directly to The Journal Gazette."

AVOW also holds a Women's Campaign Institute to guide women interested in joining boards and committees or running for office. Similar to the organization's other two programs, the mentorship program answered a widespread need: local guidance on how women can overcome common barriers to entering the political sphere.

"When you look at the results of elections, it's predominantly men. That's a real problem in Indiana - we've never had a female governor and we've never had a female U.S. senator," Faith Van Gilder said. Three Women's Campaign Institute programs have been held annually, and the organization plans to hold a fourth this fall.

A trend that Van Gilder and the other AVOW co-founders have tracked on a local level is men replacing retiring women in positions of influence. Van Gilder said that, while newer male officials may be qualified, keeping a gender balance would be preferable. In addition, she added that economic and domestic parity are still yet to be reached.

Van Gilder's focus on women's rights in every aspect of her life also translates to her role as Chief Officer of Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana-Michigan. During the month of March, when the Girl Scouts organization was also founded, troops engage in a week of activities which include learning and celebrating the history of the organization and the women who started it. Troop leaders and Girl Scout members often find sources of inspiration and strength in one another.

"Girl Scouts is all about empowering girls to be their best and learn leadership skills, and to be in a place where they can try new things and be challenged," Van Gilder said. "All of that develops their confidence, which helps them in the future as they grow and continue their education and start careers."

From supporting women in public life to teaching girls to be future leaders, Van Gilder feels that she has truly come full circle.

Sweet Potato!

A Recipe

written and designed by
CLAIRE ELLIOTT

Ingredients:

- 3-4 Medium Sweet Potatoes (About 5-6 Inches and 2-3 inches in diameter)
- Olive oil (1-2 tablespoons)
- 1 medium onion (diced)
- Garlic (1 teaspoon)
- 1 apple
- Oats (¼ cup)
- Butter
- Cinnamon (to taste)
- Salt (to taste)
- Thyme (1 teaspoon)
- Pepper (to taste)

Possible Additions:

- Bacon
- Crushed red pepper
- Whatever floats your boat

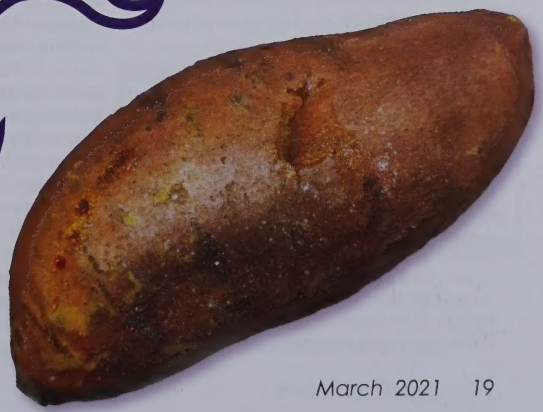
"They were cooked perfectly, and the skin salted just enough to add flavor. All of the various toppings that you added, the onion, apples, and oats were so good. I have never thought to add oats before but it was incredible, as well as the red pepper flakes"

- Leah Fry (11)

Mashed

or

Baked



Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 400o. Place sweet potatoes on a pan and rub olive oil on them. Season with a few shakes of salt.
- Place the potatoes in the oven. Set a timer for 40 minutes.
- Pour a tablespoon of olive oil into a pan that can be covered with a lid. Place diced onions in the pan and put on the lid.
- Caramelize the onions at medium-low heat.
- To caramelize onions, stir them every 6-7 minutes. Over-stirring will not allow the sugars to carry through. To avoid burning the onions, keep an eye on the pan. Adding extra olive oil or water will help protect them. Depending on your patience, the caramelization process could take from 20 to 40 minutes.
- Once the onions are nearing the end of caramelization, add a few shakes of salt, the garlic, and the thyme. Stir and cook for another minute or two.
- Depending on your onion technique, the potatoes may be ready. If uncertain, check them with a fork. The fork should easily slide through to the middle of the potato.
- Cut the apple into small, diced pieces.
- Combine all of the toppings (onions, oats, apples, cinnamon, salt, and pepper) to the baked sweet potato. Enjoy!

WINTER STORM URI IN RETROSPECT

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

The Beginning

Today is February 9th, and you are an employee of the state with a meeting to attend. A winter storm is right around the corner, and the board wants to be prepared. The meeting takes approximately two hours and twenty eight minutes, but they only spend 40 seconds talking about the winter storm and precautions to take against extreme conditions. You are a board member of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), and you have just let down your state.

Of course, how was ERCOT supposed to know that this winter storm would be particularly devastating, considering that its cause was a polar vortex? Polar vortexes are caused by natural random weather and human-made climate change. Such a combination is unpredictable, and even more so now that they are happening at a more rapid pace. The more and more often that polar vortexes occur, the more damage that they cause when they hit a place that is completely unprepared. As such, it is important to consider climate change's roll in what happened in Texas.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Texas's climate is changing. It has warmed one and a half degrees, and this warming has consequences. Average rainfall is increasing, but the soil is becoming drier and drier, and both are becoming much more intense. In addition, storms are said to become more severe and frequent, which is what made Uri so much more devastating.

"HUMANS HAVE MADE AN IMPACT ON THE ATMOSPHERE FOR SURE," SANJANA SENTHILKUMAR SAID, A COLLEGE SOPHOMORE AT BAYLOR UNIVERSITY LOCATED IN WACO, TEXAS.

For all the chaos that ensued afterwards, it is hard to believe that nobody knew what was coming. "We were not expecting it to be nearly as bad as it was, so we did not buy too much extra food or anything." Hattie White (12) from St. Steven's Episcopal School located in Austin, Texas said.

The triad of causes for bad weather; unpreparedness, climate change, and improper government management, then met each other in the middle, and so the storm Uri commenced.

The Storm in a Week

The first sign that the storm was something to be worried about was the 130 car pile up on Interstate 35 in Fort Worth that occurred the morning of February 11th. The icy conditions, caused by the polar vortex, left six people dead and at least sixty five people hospitalized. This was even before the actual duration of the winter storm, which officially started February 13th.

School districts and roads began to close down, and they stayed shuttered over the next seven days. On February 15th, the temperature would hit record lows in Texas, but that was only the beginning of their worries. Rolling blackouts began that morning as ERCOT began to experience extreme electric load. The residents who were unlucky enough to lose heat, had to find ways to stay warm, which meant either rolling themselves in every blanket they can find, or moving into their cars to find some warmth. The National Guard also came out to conduct welfare checks.

The Tuesday that followed was particularly hard on ERCOT, as their failures became more apparent. Nearly four million people are out of power as of February 16, with much more numbers to join them. The death toll is on the rise, with more causes of death being attributed to carbon monoxide poisoning. Using grills, cars, and generators in search for more heat is risky, because it causes more carbon monoxide to fill the air. It's known as the "silent killer" because it is colorless, tasteless, and odorless. At the same time, icy conditions continue to cause car crashes and disrupt traffic. And soon enough, another problem arises in the already desperate situation: water leaks.

Texans were now warned to not use water for drinking purposes, and were also called upon to keep faucets closed. Earlier, officials advised people to allow water to drip from faucets to prevent them from freezing, but the situation had become so dire that it was necessary to conserve instead.

On February 17th, ERCOT issued a statement in which the CEO explained that the issue was simply a lack of energy. But, because ERCOT controlled power outages at the beginning of the crisis, Texas was not in a complete blackout; in fact, the CEO claimed that they had averted certain catastrophe. These power outages also led to burst pipes in homes without power. Colleges suffered as well, as McMurray University to allow students to use pool water to flush toilets. Still, 3.4 million Texan households remained without power.

On the 18th, numbers for households without power were significantly better, but a reappearance of frigid temperatures slowed down recovery substantially. The main issue at that time was not necessarily the power outage, but rather the water system disruptions. Many systems were under a boil-water advisory and most reported broken and frozen pipes. It had gotten to the point at which people had started to melt snow to get clean drinking water.

"WHEN PEOPLE STARTED LOSING POWER AROUND US, WE FILLED UP OUR BATHTUBS [IN CASE WE LOST OUR WATER]," WHITE SAID.

On top of all this, food shortages began to plague the population as the food supply chain system began to break

THE LONE STAR STATE

down. The full toll of the setbacks they were experiencing in the agriculture industry in Texas, due to extreme cold and ice, was finally settling in, and these delays would set Texas back significantly livestock-wise.

The 19th brought the resurgence of water issues. Nearly half of Texas continued to experience these issues, while at the same time, nearly 190,000 homes were still without power. The people of Texas were exhausted from the constant battle they waged against the weather, and it is understandable as to why.

Saturday morning came, and while the issues were still prevalent, most of the chaos had settled down. The aftermath is yet to come.

The Aftermath

The people of Texas had seemingly struggled enough, until they were hit with another unexpected problem: electric bills. Since Texas's electricity market is deregulated (no restrictions), there's no way to stop price spikes. A mere couple of days after the brunt of the winter storm was over, Texas residents had to face incredibly high costs of electricity bills, when they weren't even able to use electricity. Governor Abott and lawmakers have said that they would attempt to provide relief, but as of right now they have not done anything.

The role of elected officials came under criticism as well. An event that garnered a lot of public attention during the events was Ted Cruz's attempt to leave Texas for Cancun, and the consequent backlash that led him to coming right back to Texas.

"He should've acted more responsibly, he knew what he was doing," Sanjana Senthilkumar said.

Although his returning did not change much, his attempt to leave was detrimental to his public image. It also showed a bigger problem in Texas government management that was observed throughout the entirety of the winter storm.

The root of most of the problems though, was the failure of the powergrid. Nearly 90% of Texas's grid is not connected to the national grid and is operated by ERCOT. Because of this, ERCOT is not regulated, and they have no requirement to comply with federal regulations. Since the electricity market in Texas is not regulated, the price of power is determined based on supply and demand, which is what caused much grief after the whole ordeal. Additionally, Texas insurance does not cover winter damages, because they never expected them. There was also an extreme economic fallout, as many industries had to take breaks during the weeklong period.

The ERCOT grid not being connected to the national grid also prevented Texas from receiving help from other states who were willing to transfer electricity to them. A lot of the electricity shortages could have been avoided, which could have in consequence prevented the water problems and food shortages. Further winterization of power generators, pipes, the grid, as well as having emergency power generation capacity could be additional risk management measures that Texas could take.

As climate change continues to fester, Texas and other parts of the country could have to take extra precautions to ensure that the next winter storm will not be as painful and devastating as this one.

SOCCER ON THE RIVERFRONT

City of Fort Wayne's Plan for sparkling new North River Soccer Complex Close to Launch

written and designed by
JACOB HOUSER

Despite Fort Wayne's considerable size as the second-largest city in the State of Indiana (around 266,000 residents as of 2019), it has never truly been the apple of any Hoosier's eye. We have Indianapolis and its major league sports team and general big-city allure, Bloomington and its beloved IU campus, and South Bend's very own University of Notre Dame to thank for that. But with news of plans for a brand new soccer complex to be built in the North River area, Fort Wayne may soon be under the spotlight.

This may be surprising news to anyone who doesn't really watch TV or even more so to soccer fans- but this doesn't seem to be a dream. Mayor Tom Henry spoke of it at the 2021 State of the City Address; "an understanding is now in place for a major development... It is a proposed project exceeding $150 million, and the project includes a professional soccer stadium, a fieldhouse, and soon after that, restaurants, an event center, a hotel, and residential areas."

Now that it is understood that a project as massive as this is coming to the city, it is very important to take a long look at the possibilities it brings along with it. A popular guess is Fort Wayne might be hosting a new professional sports team- possibly MLS or a USL minor league affiliate. If Fort Wayne were to host an MLS team, it would be the first true major league sports team Fort Wayne has hosted since the BAA and later NBA's Fort Wayne Pistons from 1948 to 1957.

Fort Wayne has technically hosted multiple professional sports teams for a very long time now, however all have been minor league affiliates to better teams in larger markets in the Big 4 leagues. Our most well-known teams, the Mad Ants, Komets, and TinCaps, are minor or developmental league affiliates of the NBA's Indiana Pacers, NHL's Vegas Golden Knights, and MLB's San Diego Padres respectively.

Hosting an MLS team would be huge for the city, as in the case that the franchise holds and does not move or fold, it sets the precedent that Fort Wayne is a sustainable market for future sports franchises in other major league sports. If Fort Wayne were to successfully host an MLS team, it might foreshadow bigger things for the city in the future.

People in Fort Wayne will surely have something to be excited about if the major-league leap is made, but even if it is a new minor-league team, it can still bring a lot of special things to the table, especially if the 30-acre property follows through on its aspirations of not only a massive soccer stadium but residential areas, hotels, business areas, and a fieldhouse.

Mock simulation of what the Soccer Complex will look like, courtesy of the State of the City Address

Not only would Fort Wayne's residents surely like to see what comes of this, but an international soccer star hailing from Fort Wayne also sees massive potential in this project. In an interview conducted with ESPN, retired MLS star DaMarcus Beasley revealed his plans to invest in a League One franchise for Fort Wayne. League One is the third tier of professional soccer- meaning it would be a minor league affiliate to a larger MLS franchise, likely a closely-located franchise such as Chicago FC or FC Cincinnati. But, this ties directly into the news of the complex being built as well as the rumors of hosting a brand new sports team. At the time of the interview with Beasley, it was stated that Beasley and his investment group had 60% of the total amount needed to found the franchise. Beasley also has ownership stakes in Fort Wayne FC, a minor-league soccer affiliate with a level akin to the TinCaps'.

Now, almost a year after the original announcement, it is very likely that Beasley's investment group is much closer to the end goal. A Memorandum of Understanding has also been signed for the project- meaning two or more parties (in this case the developers and investors of the project and the City of Fort Wayne) have agreed upon what is called a convergence of will, which is a common desire to do something. With this, it can be assumed that the project will be launched and completed without many bumps in the road. There is a clear interest to complete the project from the city and from investors. However, the question is no longer about whether the project is truth or rumor, it is now about what benefits the city can take from following through with such a massive project to begin with.

The Education Situation

written and designed by
Luke Land

The United States is one of the top countries in the world in education. Many people have varying opinions on the education system, especially teachers. Homestead Teachers, Ellen Nelson, Brady Koelinger and Brandon Shramek, were interviewed on their opinions on the United State's education system.

Teaching is very different in all states. They have different standards you must get to graduate. Also students have different in-state testing they have to take, which for us is ISTEP. Nelson has gotten to teach in many different states.

"I have had the unique opportunity to teach in various areas of the United States. I taught in West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and now in Indiana" said Nelson.

Nelson believes that it depends on the state to choose how the education system needs to be changed. Nelson thinks that could be anywhere from basic skills like reading and writing to technology skills.

Koelinger thinks that the education system needs to change based on what is happening in society. He realizes that not everyone will go to college, so teachers need to start preparing them to be contributors to society rather than preparing them for college.

"Schools need to continue to find ways to give students skills for after high school that don't require traditional college" said Koelinger.

Shramek thinks that the education system here at Homestead is very good. He does not feel like that changes need made to schooling at Homestead. He does not pay attention to education outside of Homestead, so he does not really know what changes need to be made outside of Homestead.

Nelson believes that the pandemic has changed the education system for the future. Nelson thinks that it will not change the heart of a true teacher. Nelson believes that a teacher who is passionate about teaching will find a way to reach all students.

Koelinger believes that COVID has changed education for the better. He thinks that more students will opt for a virtual option rather than being in the building.

Shramek believes that the virus has changed the future for education. He thinks that it has caused teachers to deliver the material in a more digital-friendly way. He believes that it could take a turn for the worse.

"... but COVID proved to us that if a teaching becomes too digital, it may actually be bad for some students" said Shramek.

Nelson thinks that schools should be vigilant since the pandemic. She also thinks that it does not mean to not be flexible due to a family's situation, but that schools should still maintain high standards for all students.

Shramek believes that teachers are already lenient as they are. He thinks that staying lenient to the point where students cannot take advantage of your class is a good place to be. Koelinger thinks that teaching has changed in many ways. For him, he has to come up with new ways to create labs so that students, both in-person and online, can do the labs. He either has the virtual students do a lab together and the in-person students do labs together or mix them together.

Shramek believes that geometry has changed for the worse since the pandemic. He believes that students think that you don't need a sheet of paper to work out problems in his class. He wants students to draw out diagrams, which will help them solve and understated the problems better.

"Adapt, change, repeat" said Koelinger. That is the way he described the past year in 3 words. He hit that description spot on. With the one year anniversary of COVID shutting down Homestead just past, we all had to learn how to adapt, change, and repeat. Education has changed forever since the pandemic hit. Now all we can do is wonder what would have happened if the pandemic didn't happen.

The Official Peanut Butter Ranking

-The J List-

written and designed by
JUNE HILL

Hello and welcome to the J List, where I (June) write a monthly column about whatever I have been thinking about recently. This month: peanut butter. You may be wondering why I am qualified to be providing this very official no-funny-business peanut butter ranking. It's because I ate peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for breakfast nearly every single day until eighth grade. This diet horrified my mother, who begrudgingly prepared my sandwich day after day, but don't worry - she made sure I got my veggies in at lunch.

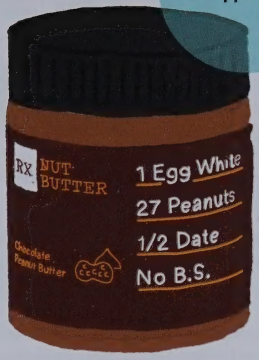
This holiest of condiments has long possessed a piece of my heart, and I'm pretty sure there is a permanent peanut butter pocket in my stomach. If there are others who are as passionate about peanut butter as I am, I have yet to meet them. So, if you also love peanut butter (or would like to dispute my ranking) please send me an email at june.hill@students.sacs.k12.in.us, because I would love to hear from you. I hope you enjoy this month's J List!

Brand: Smucker's
Price: $3.99
I grew up on Smucker's Natural and Smucker's grape jelly (fight me on grape jelly, I dare you) sandwiches. Needless to say, I have a soft spot for this peanut butter. You can't be afraid of a little oil on top. You have to mix it in - that's what makes it so delicious. This peanut butter is labeled as creamy, but since it is natural, it will not be as smooth as Jif or Skippy. The flavor is honestly immaculate and it will always be my go-to.

Brand: Trader Joe's
Price: $2.99
Trader Joe's surprised me, I'll be honest. I was wowed by the darkly roasted peanut flavor of this brand, but such a richly flavorful peanut butter may overwhelm after a few bites. However, this peanut butter was delicious and I can see myself purchasing it in the future.

#3

Brand: Jif
Price: $2.49
I don't believe you are a hardcore peanut butter fan if Jif is your favorite. If you cannot appreciate natural peanut butter, I don't think you get it. However, as far as the no-stir creamy variety goes, Jif is up there. It checks all the boxes: smooth, good peanut flavor. Yeah, that's it. There are really only two boxes.



#4

Brand: RX
Price: $7.49
The only reason RX peanut butter made the list was because I saw it in Kroger and thought, "wow, I have to try that!" It did not disappoint. Maybe it doesn't count because there are dates on the ingredient list, but the flavor is immaculate and vaguely chocolatey, which is surprising because there's not actually any chocolate in it. However, the texture is a bit clumpy and it will glue your mouth closed. Beware.

#5

Brand: Skippy
Price: $2.79
Although equally creamy, Skippy is slightly inferior to Jif. The texture is almost there, but I think it lacks a certain peanut-y punch with its mild flavor.

#6

Brand: Peter Pan
Price: $2.49
Peter Pan is smooth, like, suspiciously smooth. This texture is by far the creamiest of all the brands I tried for this article, but the flavor is lacking, as it tastes more of sweetness than of peanut. If you don't really like the flavor of peanut butter, Peter Pan is for you.

#7

Brand: Kroger
Price: $1.25
Kroger brand peanut butter was exactly what I expected. You have to wait for the flavor to hit, and it does not have the same wow factor as Jif and Skippy, but it is cheaper. This would be a good peanut butter to bake with.

#8

Brand: Maranatha
Price: $5.99
For the second most expensive peanut butter on this list, I was disappointed to discover Maranatha was by far the worst. It is more like cashew butter than peanut butter because there isn't any salt. At the store, I didn't even see a salted version from this brand, but online it says there is one. So just be careful you don't buy this particular version from Maranatha.

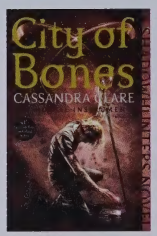
GRAPHICS BY JUNE HILL

THE BOOK NOOK

EIGHT FOR EIGHT

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

Welcome to the Book Nook, a new series that explores the world of reading, with book recommendations and reviews, tips on how to find books, and updates on Homestead's reading habits! This month's theme is 8 for 8, which offers eight recommendations for eight different genres. Plus, a look at what Homestead students like to read and how much they actually read each week. And if you're having trouble finding books that interest you, some quick tips on where other students have found some of their favorite novels. Let's get started!



FOR THOSE WHO SEE THE HIDDEN MAGIC IN THE WORLD:

Thomas' Take: Anyone who wishes they were out hunting supernatural beings and protecting the world from demons will love this book. This is the first book in Cassandra Clare's Shadowhunters universe and I instantly was intrigued by the book's protagonist, Clary Fray. She stumbles into a world of demons, supernatural beings, and Shadowhunters- those who guard the world from dangerous entities that seek to destroy it. Her journey to discover the truth about herself and her heritage is kickstarted when her mother disappears and she has to team up with these mysterious Shadowhunters. This is an awesome book with compelling dialogue, intricate world-building, and relatable characters. You'll find yourself desperately searching for the rest of the series in no time!

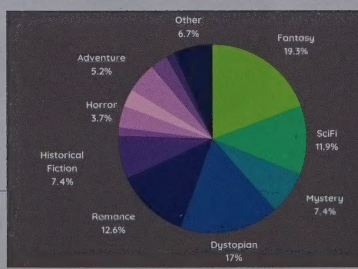
FOR FUTURE EXPLORERS OF THE GALACTIC FRONTIER:

Thomas' Take: Kira Navárez is just about to settle down with her fiance when she is sent to explore an uncolonized planet and encounters an alien entity. This encounter sets off a chain of events that enfulges the entire galaxy. Personally, I'm a huge fan of Christopher Paolini's other works and was excited to hear that he was diving into the world of SciFi. I was not disappointed by this compelling novel. Kira's internal conflict and dialect with the alien entity that has attached itself to her was so good that I consumed the book in just two days! If you enjoy movies like Alien and Independence Day, you won't be able to put To Sleep in a Sea of Stars down.

FOR THE SELF-MADE DETECTIVE:

Thomas' Take: I'm not a huge modern mystery fan, and tend to prefer classic mysteries like Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, and the Boxcar Children. However, this thrilling novel had me hooked from the beginning. Alexandra Monir's excellent use of flashbacks helps build suspense and creates a gripping narrative experience. The book bounces between the perspectives of Lana, whose boyfriend Chace was found murdered, and her roomate Nicole, who is a top suspect in his murder. You'll be all over the place trying to unravel the truth behind Chace's murder!

WHAT IS HOMESTEAD READING?



Fantasy was the top-read genre, with Dystopian coming in a close second. Romance and SciFi also proved highly popular with students.

Some of the more interesting "Other" responses included Graphic Novels, Wattpad, Webtoons, and "I dont reed."

FOR THE AMATEUR HISTORIAN [WHO DOESN'T MIND STRETCHING THE TRUTH]:

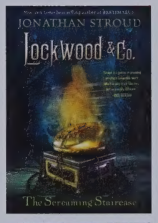
Thomas' Take: Let me take you back to the British Isles in 1939. The Great War (WWI) is a not-so-distant memory and the Nazi threat and another World War are on the horizon. Nick and his younger sister, Kate, soon become embroiled in an operation to reveal Nazi scouts exploring the English Channel along with their friend, Gunner. Matters become complicated when they run into Billy Blood, a time-traveling pirate and team up with Lord Hawke, whose children have been kidnapped by Blood and his crew. I know this sounds like a crazy, cliche plot, but the book is actually compelling and exciting. Even the time-travel aspects are seamlessly worked into a historical and more realistic story that places this book in a more historical light. I love Nick's adventurous spirit and it's impossible to not love Kate's sassy courage. This is truly a work that can draw anyone in, and I hope you'll give it a shot.

FOR THOSE WHO SEE THE CRACKS IN UTOPIA:

Thomas' Take: Picture a utopia- there is no war, famine, or hunger- or death. In fact, the only way that someone can die is when they're killed by a scythe. Scythes' job is to kill a certain number of people each year to keep the population under control. The story centers on Citra and Rowan, who are both apprenticed to a single scythe- which means that one will become a scythe and the other will be killed. Shusterman digs into the characters' psyches and really makes you empathize with both- you'll find it impossible to choose who you want to win. Plus, he really explores what it means to have a perfect, deathless society and the toll that taking a life can have on a person. This story is amazing and I highly recommend it to anyone who's into dystopian stories.

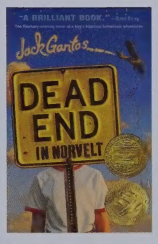
FOR BELIEVERS IN THE SUPERNATURAL:

Thomas' Take: A ghost epidemic has broken out in Lindon and has been raging for over fifty years. Lucy Carlyle moves to London with the intention of joining a prominent Psychic Investigation Agency. Instead, she finds herself teamed up with Anthony Lockwood, who runs a small, ramshackle agency. After a case goes wrong, the pair must redeem themselves by spending the night in a severely haunted house- and getting out alive. This story was a recommend from my brother, and it was actually really good. This is a lighter horror novel (I don't really read hardcore horror other than some select Stephen King), but is still good for anyone who likes books that give them a bit of scare. Lucy is a fun character to watch grow and Anthony is a great enigma to figure out. This is truly a spooky read!



FOR COMEDIANS AND FANS OF THEIR HILARIOUS HIJINKS:

Thomas' Take: Ah, Jack Gantos. What a character. This hilarious novel is part truthful memoir and part wildly hilarious fiction, and the blend works to the story's benefit. The story begins with Jack's summer being ruined when he is grounded, but begins to turn around when he is assigned to help out his feisty old neighbor, who writes obituaries for the town paper. The obituaries soon expose a comedic plot that launches Jack into a kooky adventure involving everything from Eleanor Roosevelt to a dancing plague to Hell's Angels. I was laughing out loud at this absolutely comic story that pulls you in with the promise of mystery, but adds a touch of comedy to every aspect of the story. I guarantee that there will be no one who is disappointed with the absurdity of Jack Gantos' misadventures with testy old Miss Volker.

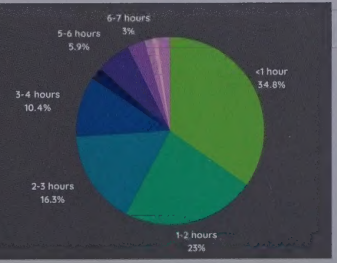


FOR TIMID LOVERS AND HOPELESS ROMANTICS:

Thomas' Take: I must say, I am not an avid reader of romance novels. In fact, I think this is probably one of five romance novels I've read. However, I found this story to be heartwarming and generally fun. Lara Jean, the main character, has never admitted her crushes, instead writing a letter to each after her crush was over. The catch is that she didn't send those letters- she put them into a shoebox in her closet. Somehow, those letters get sent and Lara Jean is in a mess. What begins as a fake romance with one of her former crushes to throw off her latest crush soon becomes something more substantial. I found this to be a sweet, enjoyable story that would be a fun weekend or vacation read.

Unsuprisingly, the overwhelming majority of students read less than 1 hour a week. A smaller portion read 1-2 and 2-3 hours a week.

A very small portion of students read more than 4 hours a week, and only 3 students read an astounding 10+ hours a week!



HOW MUCH IS HOMESTEAD READING?

Check out our past issues on hhsspartana.com

Spartana

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Read Student Poetry to celebrate national poetry month and the power of creativity.

From the Editor...

Dear Reader,

Spring has sprung! Or at least I hope so... as I watch the snow fall out of the sky on this April day. Maybe when this issue comes out, though, there will be birds chirping and flowers blooming again, and this snow will be a vague memory I will only remember when it returns next year.

While it is with great happiness, I announce the coming of spring, it is also with great sadness I reflect on this issue. This will be my lasting time writing this letter. This will be my last time being the editor-in-chief of the Spartana. After two years of these letters, you think I would be tired of writing of them, and you are not entirely wrong. That is how I know that for the May Issue, you will be in the much more capable hands of the Spartana's junior editor, Claire Elliott.

Homestead's motto is "start strong to finish strong," and while I do not necessarily believe that starting strong is always possible, finishing strong certainly is. Even with the rough start to this year, I know Homestead will overcome and finish this year stronger than ever before. See you next month for a final issue! And check out our new and improved website, hhsspartana.com!

Happy Reading,
Mikayla Havison
Editor-in-Chief

Remembering Mr. Sagnon

written and designed by
MIKAYLA HAVISON

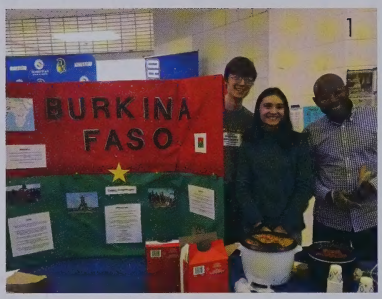
Mr. Sagnon was one of those teachers who you could never imagine having a bad day. Inside and outside of the classroom, Mr. Sagnon spread an infectious positivity, and nearly every word he spoke sounded like a proverb or at the very least something that should have been remembered and recalled in time of need.

"You have to know what you want to be," Mr. Sagnon said on the video announcements in 2017. "Take a step, another step, another step and keep winning each step. Never back down."

On Friday, April 9, Mr. Sagnon passed away after falling ill, leaving behind a hole in the heart of Homestead.

He was more than a teacher of the year, but a friend and guiding force whose memory will live in our minds forever. Thank you, Mr. Sagnon.

Here are notes from some of Mr. Sagnon's colleagues. While they certainly do not capture every memory of Mr. Sagnon, I hope they help convey just how many lives Mr. Sagnon touched while he was here.



1

2

Mr. Drake

Joyful. Confident. Humble. Grateful.

These are the words that come to mind when I think of Marius Sagnon, my friend and colleague.

We knew each other for about five years. It started when we were both instructors at Purdue Fort Wayne, and I never imagined that we would be colleagues together again at Homestead. It just shows you that the destinations on the road of life are not predictable. Much like the passing of my friend.

In this year of Covid teaching, Marius became my go-to person. When I needed to be reminded of our mission as educators, I went to Marius. When I needed to be reminded of our mission as human beings living in community with others, I went to Marius. Yet my most cherished memory is the secret handshake we developed. And I called him "Emperador" ("Emperor"), and he called me "Caudillo" ("Commander.") Marius was an emperor.

Mrs. Sale

Mr. Sagnon was one of the most kind and warm-hearted people I have ever known. He cared immensely for his students and co-workers, and he only wanted to make everyone feel included and cared about. There were times when he paid for students to go on our French Club field trips when they didn't come up with the money because he didn't want to leave anyone out. Last year he left his house early every Friday morning to buy, with his own money, coffee and doughnuts for his students because he wanted everyone to start off with a good morning. Because he was so generous, he never turned away students who came into his room, even if they weren't taking French. He would say "How could I deny a child a doughnut?!" in his signature accent when his students would complain about the doughnuts being gone. He truly had the biggest heart and knowing him the past four years has made me a better person and teacher. His legacy will surely live on in all our hearts.

3

1. Mr. Sagnon with Elyssa Huff (12) and former student, Ethan Ledbetter at Taste of Homestead. They represented Burkina Faso, Mr. Sagnon's country of origin.
2. Mr. Sagnon with Mr. Schenkel.
3. Mr. Sagnon at Legends Corner. Mr. Schenkel and Mr. Sagnon attended many concerts together.

Mr. Schenkel

Marius and I go way back, even a few years before he became a teacher at Homestead. At one time, he was an aide to a student with a disability of mine and we developed a friendship during that time. Eventually, Marius became a substitute teacher at SACS and I was missing a lot of time to deal with my wife who had fallen ill. I would always have Marius be my substitute teacher and our friendship only grew from there.

Our friendship grew around Homestead Athletics as he would accompany my broadcasting students and me to many games, including three state finals for basketball in Indy.

I also felt it was my job to get him introduced to American culture, so we would take various trips together (Chicago, Nashville, Indy, Detroit, etc.) during our Summer Break. One of my favorite memories of Marius is introducing him to rock concerts. Together we've seen Bruce Springsteen, Sigur Ros, Band of Horses, Alabama Shakes, Father John Misty, Third Eye Blind and Jimmy Eat World (and others that slip my mind). He loved live music and interacting with crowds and people while there.

I've learned since he became ill just how many friends he had. It wasn't a surprise by any means, but I was amazed by the love and support from so many people to Marius. He could make anyone feel like they were best friends. I'm going to miss his smile, humor and deep accent while talking the most. When I need a smile or laugh, I will pull up some of my favorite memories with him in old photos, texts and recollections. Rest in peace, my friend.

Mr. Peeper

"Are you really royalty?"

That question has brought a smile to my face for more than five years. Those four words always made my dear friend and colleague Marius laugh as he told and re-told the story of the day Mr. Lake and I walked into his classroom one spring morning before school with some currency and a tale to tell.

It was the Spring of 2015. Mr. Lake and I started talking about the movie "Coming to America," the 1988 comedy starring Eddie Murphy. Murphy plays the role of Prince Akeem, a handsome and generous prince from an African country who moves to America in search of romance. Since Prince Akeem is royalty, his face appears on the currency from his country.

The movie reminded us of Marius, who had also moved to the United States from Africa. We decided to play a joke on Marius by putting his picture on currency from an African country. With a little help from Photoshop, Mr. Lake put Marius' face on the currency, and we printed off some bills.

We entered Marius' class a few minutes before first period on March 6, 2016.

"Do you realize you're learning French from a prince?" we asked his students. Their reaction was priceless as they waited for an explanation.

We started to tell the story of Prince Marius, who had moved to Fort Wayne from his royal palace. A few seconds later, we pulled out the money to show his students as Marius started laughing and denying everything we were saying as he tried to convince the students that the only kings in the room that morning were Mr. Lake and Señor Peeper.

By lunch time, the story had spread around the halls as some of Marius' students told their friends and teachers about the joke Mr. Lake and I had played that morning.

One teacher who heard the joke, however, didn't realize it was a joke.

That afternoon, he walked up to Marius and in a low and serious voice asked, "Are you really royalty?"

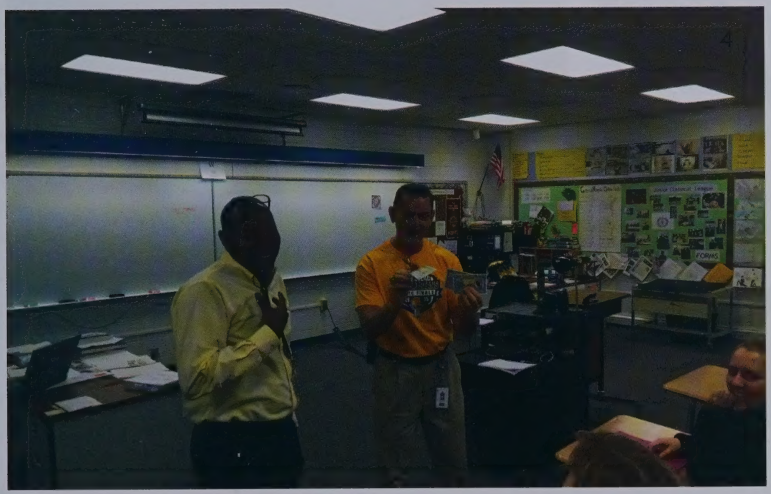
Marius couldn't keep a straight face as he unequivocally denied being a prince.

From that day on, Marius became El Rey — The King.

Mr. Lake and I would show his money to students every now and then. The story is one Marius, Mr. Lake and I would re-tell several times a year as we smiled, laughed and listened to humble Marius deny it and try to shift the focus back to us.

Marius' friendship is one that Mr. Lake and I will treasure for the rest of our lives, as we're both better men today because of our brother Marius and his impact on our lives.

4. Mr. Peeper and Mr. Lake playing a prank on Mr. Sagnon and his class by photoshopping Mr. Sagnon onto African money. Some believed Mr. Sagnon was really a king.
5. Mr. Sagnon and Mr. Peeper.
6. Mr. Sagnon playing soccer.



LAX to the MAX

written and designed by
Luke Land

There are many sports at Homestead that do not get any recognition. For example, the lacrosse team. They really never get any recognition from the school. This month, you will get insight and feedback from players on the girls lacrosse team.

This year, the girls lacrosse team has a smaller group of girls tryout for the team, so everyone made varsity for this season.

During most practices, the girls start out by running a mile. After that, they move into stick work, then prepare different things for the next upcoming game they have. To end practice, the girls go into 7v7 scrimmages and practice in-game scenarios.

Hudson Custer, (12), was really sad to miss out on her junior year. Her and her friends were really excited for the season just for it to get cancelled. So this year, it was hard for her to adjust to the field. She is appreciating this season more than ever because of her lost junior season.

Custer believes that the sophomores and freshman are adapting to high school lacrosse very well. She believes that it has been a time for growth and adjustment for the freshman and sophomores. She had some very encouraging comments to say for girls who are interested in lacrosse.

"Our team is all about growth and learning, as we encourage girls who have never played lacrosse before to come and try it!" said Custer.

Custer believes that, so far, the season has started off amazing this year. The lacrosse team is currently first in the region and they work more and more as a team after each and every game. She is proud of what the girls have achieved so far.

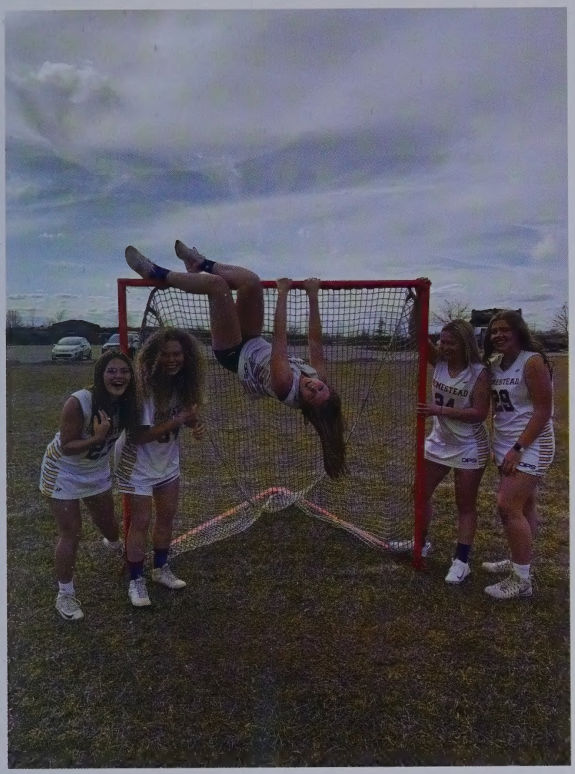
With success, there will always be challenges. Custer believes that there have been many challenges in the season. There is an entirely new coaching staff that came in last year, but due to COVID, this is the first year that the girls are meeting them. Also, the new sophomores and freshmen are also here, so it was hard to find a balance.

"It took a while to figure out how to work with each other in the most efficient way possible," said Custer.

Helen Darmofal, (12), was quite sad not having a junior season. Last season, they had a few practices, and the day before their first game, the season was cancelled. Darmofal was also coming back from an ACL and meniscus surgery, so she was excited to play, but couldn't until the summer.

"I felt like our team would have been very good compared to what it was in the past years" said Darmofal.

Darmofal thinks that the new girls are doing great to adapt to the next level.



They have shown a lot of improvement They have had a lot of freshmen, sophomores and a couple juniors that have never played before, and they have adapted well to lacrosse.

Darmofal believes that she didn't miss out on many scholarship offers from missing her junior year. She would usually get offers from when she was playing on a travel team. Recently, she committed to Davenport University, a Division II school for lacrosse.

Darmofal thinks that the main challenge they have faced was not having a true home field to play on. They have to pay to play on the football field, and most practices are held at the YMCA. They only have one home game this year, and the rest they have to travel far to get the the rest of the games.

"We only have one home game and the rest we have to travel 1-4+ hours to get to every weekend and sometimes on weekdays," said Darmofal.

Torrence Ruggles, (10), has adapted well to lacrosse at Homestead. The coaching staff is super encouraging, which helped her make the change to lacrosse very easy for her.

Ruggles has adapted well to the physicality and competitiveness at the high school level. She believes that there is really no difference between travel lacrosse and school lacrosse.

"There is really not a large difference between travel lacrosse and high school lacrosse so it has been an easy change," said Ruggles.

Ruggles thinks that the season has gone great so far. The girls have played well together and have won games as a team.

HOMESTEAD PRESENTS: Footloose!

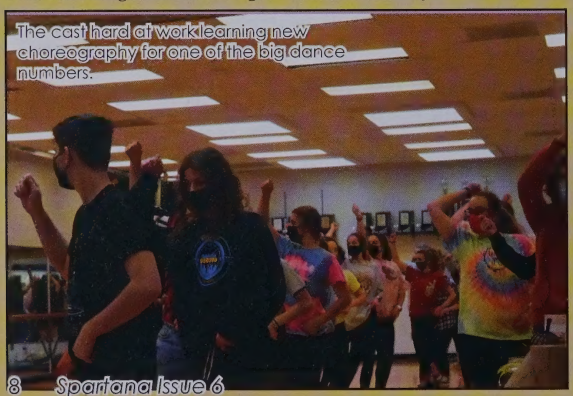
written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

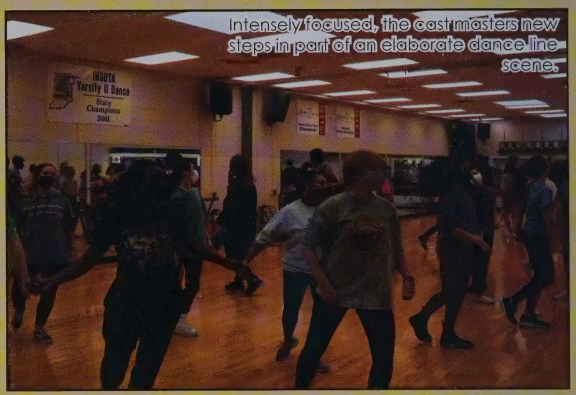
With Show Choir season over, the Performing Arts department has turned its attention to one of Homestead's most anticipated spring events- the musical! This year, Mr. Shaw, the director, picked the iconic Footloose, originally a movie, as the musical. Mr Shaw has "always loved the music, and it was a good fit this year."

Footloose itself has an interesting history. Originally a 1984 movie musical starring Kevin Bacon, it was adapted to the stage and premiered on Broadway in 1998. The musical was a hit, spawning a British production and national tour. Even after the show closed on Broadway in 2000, it returned for an anniversary tour in 2008 in America, as well as 2016 and 2017 tours in the UK. The movie has also had great success, becoming a cult classic and getting a 2011 remake starring Kenny Womald and Julianne Hough, although the remake performed significantly worse than the original.

Now, it is Homestead's turn to take on the iconic musical. Parker Bowman (11), one of male leads, Ren, has seen the movie to "get a general feeling for Ren's character," which will help him "bring the character to the stage". Rehearsals have already begun, with cast members putting in hours of work weekly to learn new choreography and practice scenes. Zane Bray (10), plays the other male lead, Reverend Shaw, and says that "looking in a mirror while rehearsing is... a great thing to do because facial expressions and body language are very important" while performing.

The musical holds open auditions every year, and cast members encourage students to give it a shot and try out. It's "a fun experience and a way to take our minds off of the current events" says Bray, even if you don't make it. Rachel Lopez (11), who plays Ariel, the female lead, says not to be disappointed with smaller parts: " Even if you're cast in the ensemble your first time around, some of my best musical memories come from being in the ensemble myself." There's no reason not to give the musical a chance and try out.


The cast hard at work learning new choreography for one of the big dance numbers.


Intensely focused, the cast masters new steps in part of an elaborate dance line scene.

Because of COVID-19, some parts of the musical will be different from previous years. Lopez says that "there would normally be scenes that include moments of affection between two characters, but we've had to cut down" some of those moments. Other changes include all performers wearing masks during performances and socially distanced scenes. Mr. Shaw adds that there will be "fewer audience members for each performance". The process for getting tickets this year is still being determined, also due to COVID concerns over audience size.

Many people choose to skip watching the musical because it sounds boring, but Lopez thinks that Footloose is "not your typical high school musical" and "instead feels like something (that) specifically students can connect to." Bowman agrees that this is not the year to ignore the musical: "There is never a dull moment with the show, as the story grows increasingly interesting as tensions rise between the characters." Plus, the cast puts in a lot of time and effort to put on each production, so let's reward their hard work and attend the show.

Be sure to check out Homestead's production of Footloose this May from Thursday the 13th to Saturday the 15th!

Cast List

Ren.....Parker Bowman
Ariel.....Rachel Lopez
Reverend Shaw.....Zane Bray
Vi.....Autumn Harlan
Ethel.....Deborah Girma
Lulu.....Lindsey DiGiulio
Wes.....Brock Flynn
Coach Dunbar.....Avi Raj
Eleanor.....Mackenzie Lee
Rusty-.....Cassie Rentfrow
Urleen.....Addi Antibus
Wendy Jo.....Veronica Wesner
Chuck Cranston.....Ethan Hart
Lyle.....Juan Sandoval
Travis.....Landon Richey
Cop.....Michael Mazza
Betty Blast.....Eliza Clegg
Willard.....Skyler Neuhaus
Principal Clark.....Alex Ruppert
Jeter.....Alejandro Tinnell
Bickle.....Marshall McMillan
Garvin..... Owen Hatch
Cowboy Bob.....Cory Rodgers
Cowboy Bob's Band.....Sam Poor, Avi Raj, Ben Burkle, Nicolas Dutt, Caleb Bolton
Townspeople/Ensemble/Students.....Elena Matyas, Catherine Ahlersmeyer, Ren Moore
.....Hannah Moses, Jasper Moore, Kate Hutner, Ella Yates, Ellie Villaruz, Kate Landrigan
.....Braedon Plummer-Collins, Kenzie Woodard, Savannah Strack, Meghan Kelley, Leah Fry
.....Sadie Lorenz, Trinity Beverly, Adrienne Tranter, Caroline O'Connor, Henley Callebs, Ava Adams
.....Jensen Clegg, Sam Ratkos, Grant Metcalfe, Sam Birkey

Spring Forward

written by
ELYSSA HUFF
designed by Julia Epling

With spring comes the blooming of flowers and animals frolicking in the deep green grass. The air is clean—despite the smell of dogwood trees—the sun shines, and it becomes easy to gleefully spend time outside.

For many students, though, the arrival of spring brings an additional, non-environmental benefit: happiness that might have proved elusive throughout the dark and cold days of winter.

"I dislike the cold because I get cold really easily, and I also hate driving in the snow and ice," Allexandra DeLuca (12) said. "I also feel like the end of the semester stress in the winter makes it less enjoyable, especially because we have school so late in the year. The combination of both these things brings the mood down and it kind of feels like there is nothing to look forward to because nice weather is so far away."

For many students, winter can have a negative effect on their mental health and overall happiness throughout the season.

"My mental state is definitely worse in the winter than in the summer, especially once break is over. I like to talk walks outside to clear my mind and take a break from schoolwork, and while I could do that in the winter it is a lot less pleasant and enjoyable," DeLuca said. "So as a result I get outside and do physical activity less and that usually brings me down."

Since winter can affect personal habits, spring brings a change in students' personal lives.

"I'm less encouraged in the winter to take care of myself and do physical exercise because a) it's cold, snowy, and icy outside, and b) the gyms are always packed. I love sitting in the sun and I can't really do that in the winter," Katherine Hargan (12) said.

Many students, therefore, eagerly anticipate the coming of spring after a winter of hardship.

"Spring is my favorite season because life reemerges," Madeline Emenhiser (11) said. "I love seeing the baby animals and the buds on trees, and the air has a sweeter smell. There is a lighter ambiance, but that is hard to explain."

This excitement is more amplified by the impact of COVID and quarantine, during which students had to stay inside longer than usual. In this tumultuous year, a spring after a long period of quarantine may have greater significance than usual as it means the coming of a new era.

"I would say I'm even more excited for spring than usual this year because with COVID the winter depression was even worse this year, especially when we were online. Spring also means that we'll almost be done with school pretty soon and the last few weeks of school go fast usually," DeLuca said.

Spring means a new season, with all the greenery fully in bloom. For many seniors, however, the most exciting season to look forward to this year is summer.

"I'm so excited for summer," DeLuca said. "I really like to be able to walk outside and be done with school. There are so many fun activities that can be done outside in the summer that can't be done in the winter, like walking outside and going to the pool."

Although summer may be a ways away, for now we've escaped the dreary days of winter. Spring is certainly something to celebrate and look forward to—as well as spending some important time outside on non-snow-covered ground.

OPINION

Good Dog, Bad Owner

written and designed by
WELDON RODOCKER

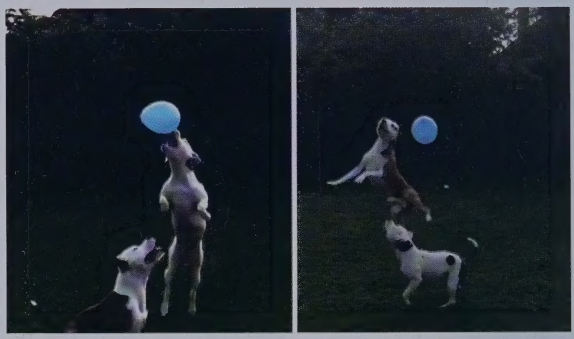
Dogs are one of the most beloved animals in the world. Different breeds of dogs are all a little different but it is still a loving dog. Pitbulls, for example, get a horrible name from many people who don't know what these dogs are even like. These dogs are among the most loyal of dogs. Their love for their owners is what makes them one of the most popular dog breeds in America. It also happens to be the reason that they get such a negative reputation. Too often do we see these dogs in a negative article because it really isn't their fault. These dogs can be trained to do almost anything that the owner wants because these dogs don't see it as violence they see it as pleasing their owners. There never is a bad dog, there are just bad owners.

NFL start quarterback Michael Vick is a great example of this. 14 years ago 51 pitbulls were rescued from the NFL star after police had found out about a dog fighting ring held by Vick. There were more dogs that could not be rescued because of either injuries. The dogs found were trained to be aggressive and were bred to fight. Yet 47 of those dogs now have loving families and are some of the most gentle dogs you will ever see and are happy. These dogs' natural nature is to love people but they can be trained for horrible things. Michael vick received 23 months in prison and many felt that was not an adequate punishment for his crimes.

The majority of Pitbull owners say that their dogs have never once had a violent outburst. HHS junior Aiden Menefee, who owns two Pitbulls and two Bulldogs, said that "the most violent thing my dogs are capable of is destroying my shoes". I got the chance to meet his dogs and I have never seen such loving and lazy dogs in my life. As soon as you enter the house you are greeted with four happy dogs that want one thing, attention. I asked him what he had to do to train these dogs to be so obedient and he replied by saying "Really its pretty easy you just have to teach the oldest dog what to do and then the rest just follow suit". Aiden's dogs are a great example of what happens when you treat your dogs with love rather than treating them like a weapon.When I asked my next door neighbor about his two pitbull he said almost the same thing. His biggest complaint about pitbull was " your bed gets alot smaller".

In recent years pitbull hate has been going down because many owners are becoming more vocal about how great these dogs are to combat the negative label. Many owners are sick of seeing the breed they fell in love with be spoken negatively about. More and more now you see positive pitbulls stories or videos.

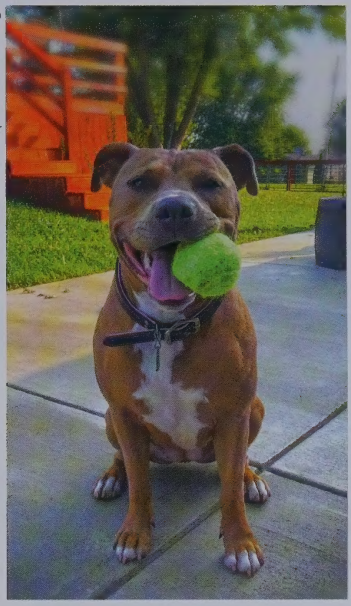
Back in 2007 police confiscated 51 pitbulls from Michael Vick. Many gained sympathy for these dogs but many just generalized the whole breed as agressive as they attempted to blame the dogs and not the trainers.



Two pitbulls seen gently playing with a balloon. These dogs are very smart and they understand when they have to be gentle. Its te same as when they are playing with little kids, often they treat them gently like puppies.

One of the reasons pitbulls are such popular dogs, aside from their loyalty, is the smilling, happy appearance they sport when they go about their lives. This is the perfect face to come home to after a stressfull day.

These Are not the dog to get if you are expecting a lazy dog. Pitbulls are full of energy and like to run around and play but at the end of the day when it comes time for bed they are going to be right next to you all night.

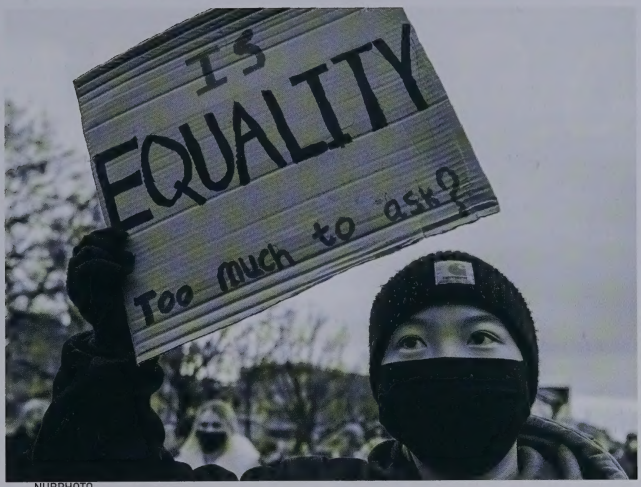


Many Celebrities fell in love with Pit bulls. 6-time superbowl champion Tom Brady and his wife have been very vocal about their love for their Pitbulls and are both strong advocates to get rid of the negative connotation surrounding the breed.

written by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN & MADELINE PHUONG
designed by Madeline Phuong

Asian American: a term encompassing those descended from over 70 Asian and Pacific Island nations.

Spanning from the mid-1800s to today, Asian Americans have played a prominent role in the development of national infrastructure, paved the way in creating systemic change, and stood in the frontlines against the global COVID-19 pandemic. Now, they speak out against the recent rise in anti-Asian hate crimes.



NURPHOTO

Pulled by the opportunity of striking it rich in gold, East Asians began to immigrate across the Pacific Ocean during U.S. westward expansion. In 1871, amid Pacific Coast race riots, a white and Hispanic mob lynched 18 Chinese Americans - what was, at the time, ten percent of the Los Angeles Chinese population. The ten white men tried for the murders went unconvicted. This incident later became known as the Chinese Massacre, and anti-Asian sentiment only grew in the following years.

Most notably, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first and only federal legislation to limit immigration by race. Founded on perceptions of Chinese migrant workers as inferior and unclean, it followed an 1875 act limiting immigration of Chinese women seen as lewd and immoral. Similarly, in the early 20th century, the United States' heavy-handed colonial rule of the Philippines was justified through the mischaracterization of Filipino people as uncivilized.

Less than half a century after the Chinese Massacre, the Bellingham Riots occurred in Washington. A mob of nearly 500 white men attacked the homes, businesses, and families of Punjabi South Asian migrant workers in September of 1907. In a little over a week, all South Asians, fearing for their safety, fled the area. The vitriol of the Bellingham Asiatic Exclusion League, dedicated to their mission of preventing Asian immigration, was exacerbated by local anti-Asian newspapers.

An extension of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the Immigration Act of 1917 further restricted Asian immigration, requiring literacy tests and declaring the Asia-Pacific region as a "barred zone" for immigration.

Not only was anti-Asian hate crime unpunished and often endorsed but such hostility was also translated into attainment of citizenship. The 1923 Supreme Court case of *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* established Thind, a South Asian American, as ineligible for naturalization on basis of race. The court's decision overturned that of lower federal and district courts which granted Thind naturalization. In his opinion of the court, Associate Justice George Sutherland wrote that "it is not likely that Congress would be willing to accept as citizens a class of persons whom it rejects as immigrants."

Sutherland's noted dismissal of Asian Americans as citizens was later reflected in the notorious 1942 to 1945 Japanese internment camps. In the devastating aftermath of Pearl Harbor, Americans became fearful that Japanese American citizens would act as spies for a Japanese invasion of the Pacific Coast. Pressured by public distress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 forced Japanese Americans — including those who were American citizens — into unregulated and isolated internment camps. The evacuees were stripped of both property and dignity.

More than eight decades after the initial Chinese Exclusion Act, the 1965 Immigration Act lifted immigration restrictions based on nationality. Regardless, the federal government continued to limit incoming immigrants based upon credentials. The act prioritized highly-educated doctors, scientists, and other professionals from non-Western nations.

With this in mind, the monolith of Asian Americans as the "model minority" quickly took hold. Sociologist William Peterson coined the term "model minority" in 1966, attributing the success of Japanese Americans to their cultural values and inclination for hard work.

Since then, the term maintains its illusory praise of Asian Americans, often upholding those who have fulfilled the American Dream while ignoring those who struggle to adjust. In fact, Asian Americans are one of the most socioeconomically diverse groups in the United States. The Pew Research Center states that Asian Americans "in the top 10% of the income distribution earned 10.7 times as much as Asians in the bottom 10%" (Kochar and Cilluffo, 2018). Furthermore, the stereotype of Asian Americans as successful, hardworking, and obedient has historically been used to create racial division among minority groups with vastly different experiences.

The deceptive overgeneralization of Asian American success has been fatal for some. On June 19, 1982, Chinese American Vincent Chin was beaten to death by two white autoworkers in Detroit, Michigan. The murderers targeted Chin due to national resentment of the growth of the Japanese auto industry during an oil crisis and economic recession. Wayne County Circuit Judge Charles Kaufman declared that both of Chin's killers "aren't the kind of men you send to jail." They were given probation and fined a mere $6,000 for manslaughter.

The oversight in justice for Chin and his grieving family sparked nationwide protests. Asian American civil rights organizations, including American Citizens for Justice, were formed. The U.S. Department of Justice investigated the case as a civil rights violation - the first time in history such a claim was pursued on behalf of an Asian American. Ultimately, though, neither of Chin's murderers spent a single day in jail.

And that brings us up to date to 2021, the beginning of a brand new decade fraught with the remnants of the COVID-19 pandemic and a tumultuous political landscape. The pandemic, partnered with xenophobic rhetoric, caused an increase in anti-Asian discrimination and hate crimes.

There was an estimated 149% jump in hate crimes from 2019 to 2020, according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, and the number of reported hate crimes only seems to increase as 2021 progresses. Additionally, Stop AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) Hate, recorded nearly 3,800 hate incidents during 2020, and there are plenty more that go unreported. Social media feeds are filled to the brim with video after video showing horrific hate crimes.

In an anonymous and optional survey of 144 Homestead Spartans, students expressed their views on the Stop AAPI Hate Movement and related events. 49.3% of Spartans agree or strongly agree that they have been victim of or witness to racial discrimination. 31.2% of Spartans agree or strongly agree that the American public school system is doing enough to create a safe environment for Asian minorities. 40.3% of Spartans agree or strongly agree that they have been keeping up to date with the news on Asian hate crimes.

America finally reached its boiling point on March 16 when a series of mass shootings occurred at three spas in the Atlanta, Georgia area. Six of the eight victims were Asian women. 62.5% of Spartans agree or strongly agree that the Atlanta, Georgia shooting was racially motivated. The shooter has not yet been charged with a hate crime in legal proceedings.*

In response to this horrific crime, the #StopAsianHate movement emerged. The movement is being expressed in many forms, the most prominent of which is rallies, as people take to the streets to demonstrate their stand against discrimination. In the local Fort Wayne community, the First Presbyterian Church organized and conducted a March 20 rally on Clinton Street.

"We were out there demonstrating that (not only) what happened clearly was wrong, but that hatred was wrong," Reverend Dr. Anne Epling, Pastor and Head of Staff at First Presbyterian Church, said.

The First Presbyterian Church congregation is a constant advocate for social reform. Epling also noted that communication and trust have broken down in our community, especially between the people and the police, and that denial has persisted, making it difficult to reconcile. This prevents Asian Americans from having a platform to discuss experiences, hindering real conversations on how to stop discrimination.

"That's what was so disheartening: people wanted to argue that (racism) doesn't exist," Epling said. Her best advice is to start making change, even at a local level. Talk to different people with opposing views and try to find common ground.

Reverend Dr. Youngsoo An, Associate Pastor for the Korean Language Ministry at First Presbyterian Church, holds similar sentiments as his colleague.

"Difference does not mean that somebody has the right to decide which color is superior or inferior," An said.

He detailed his own brush with racism that occurred this year. A man had asked An a question drenched in racism, and it was a very painful incident. At the time, An said nothing.

"If I meet that situation again, I will say something," An said. He emphasized the idea that everyone is created equally, and that discrimination has no place in our society. To An, the First Presbyterian Church had a simple message for their peaceful rally: racism is wrong, in any form.

Of course, attending a rally is not the only way to cast a spotlight on issues that plague the Asian American community. Yeyoon Song (10) started a fundraiser in the name of the American Association for Justice to to promote unity in Fort Wayne. He believes that our city is one of the more diverse and accepting communities, yet stereotypes and microaggressions persist.

"I think a lot of teenagers might think they don't have any power or any ability to stop discrimination and racism from happening in today's society, but I personally think that we have a lot of power to make changes," Song says. He believes that social media is a particularly powerful tool.

Song also discusses his frustration with how Asian American history is overlooked in schools, often leading to a general disregard of anti-Asian discrimination.

"I think (racism toward Asian Americans) went unnoticed because we never had a big movement that really captured the media, but I think after the event in Atlanta, it really was just pent-up frustration," Song said.

But for those discouraged from signing countless petitions and sharing what seems to be pointless posts on social media, change is coming.

On April 14, the Illinois House of Representatives passed the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History Act by a vote of 98 to 13. The bill mandates that Asian-American history be taught in schools. It still has to go through the Illinois Senate for deliberation, but, if passed, Illinois will be the first state to mandate Asian American history in public schools.

Other than rallies and fundraisers, there are organizations dedicated to having conversations about Asian American history and discrimination. In fact, there is one such group that Homestead students can easily attend: Asian Alliance.

"We've talked about the Stop Asian Hate movement and we're going to continue to talk about it," Asian Alliance President Hannah Groeneweg (10) said. She stressed the necessity of keeping the spotlight on anti-Asian hate crimes relevant. The best way to do this is to keep the conversation going.

"Not many people were talking about it so people didn't see it," Groeneweg said. "It starts with the individual person."

In addition to an emphasis on individual action, she hopes to unite people of both Asian and non-Asian descent through the sharing of experiences, culture, and traditions. Asian Alliance celebrates differences in Asian cultures through the play of traditional games, trying traditional snacks, and culture days, where each person makes a presentation to educate others about one specific culture.

Groeneweg noted the striking lack of knowledge about Asian culture, highlighting Asian Alliance as a space of open-mindedness and learning. Her own experience with racial ignorance motivated her to take a position of leadership in the club. Groeneweg recalled a common scenario she faced when bringing a traditional food from her culture to lunch, only to be met with rude remarks about the food's smell or appearance. Microaggressions such as this, much of the time done unknowingly, reinforce the identity of Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners.

She further detailed the impact that one person can have by simply educating others when it comes to race. Educating a person, as well as letting them know that their action or behavior is wrong, is the most important part of a confrontation.

Asian Alliance is held every Thursday at 3:30 p.m. in Room 117. All are welcome to join.

*Current as of April 20, 2021

SPARTAN P.O.V.

Spartan Point of View: The following are direct and anonymous quotes from Homestead Spartans concerning the Stop Asian Hate movement.

"It's been difficult over the years, watching (my adopted sibling) completely assimilate into white American culture. I'm not sure if myself or my parents are to blame, or if society has taught her to be ashamed of her background, but I feel bad that she has more or less abandoned her heritage out of embarrassment."

"WE WHO KNOW OPPRESSION SHOULDN'T OPPRESS OTHERS."

"I'm not denying that (discrimination against Asian Americans) exists, I just personally don't see how widespread it is."

"I answered a phone call at work regarding a withdrawal of Chinese-made product sales. Although I found that funny because it seems they lack sense of economics, I was taken aback at the rapid rise in Asian-American discrimination."

"A friend of mine from a different school has been told at lunch when she brings her mom's homemade Korean food, that dog is not allowed to be eaten in that school and she needs to not eat unless she is having American food."

"IT HURTS SO MUCH TO HEAR HOW I NEED TO COVER A PART OF MYSELF, JUST TO FEEL SAFE FROM ALL OF THESE RACIST PEOPLE."

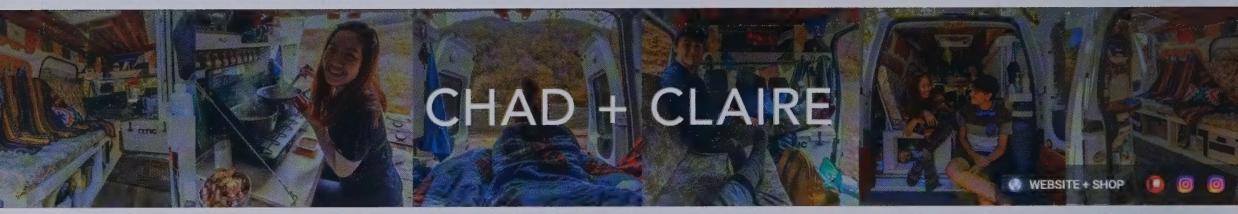
"The Stop Asian Hate movement is unnecessary and the recent shooting had nothing to do with race."

-The J List-

5 Comfort YouTubers you Should be Watching

written and designed by
JUNE HILL

Ah, YouTube. A place of endless distraction and procrastination. Most of the time, we get stuck watching videos of loud obnoxious teenagers living cooler lives than we do, but that doesn't have to be the case. YouTube videos can also be a great way to calm down after an exhausting day. For this month's J List, I present five comfort channels on YouTube. I love all of these people because they aren't really in it for the money. Youtube is not their job. They have greater aspirations, and YouTube is simply their way of sharing their journey with the world. So, settle in with a nice snack, and get to know some of my favorite comfort creators.



Channel: Chad+Claire

Imagine the most wholesome two people on earth, and then put them in a tiny van together and watch them explore the world. That is Chad and Claire's YouTube channel. I got obsessed with their videos back in february when I was heavily considering taking a gap year and decking out a Ford Transit Connect of my own.

On their channel, Chad and Claire travel all over the U.S, from beaches in Maine to California. Where some Youtubers (literally) shout and beg for attention, these two are not overly enthusiastic. Their videos are personal and comforting, with Claire's soft voice and Chad's winning smile reaching out through the screen to share their adventures. You can tell that they are in absolute awe of each new place they visit. These two had me very close to taking a gap year.

First video you should watch: 48 Hours in Yosemite Valley - What to do in the Springtime

Channel: Grackle

I love this chipper lady with all my heart, I really do. Grackle, also known as Grace Booth, posts many casual, day-in-the-life type videos featuring her majestic cat Banksy, her adorable goon of a father and her passion for baking. I first started watching her videos in quarantine when I needed a healthy dose of normalcy and Grace came through.

She is unapologetically joyful and weird. If she isn't baking in a video, she is judging birthday cakes or finding London's best chocolate chip cookie. Grace makes for a perfect lunchtime companion if you like to watch something while you eat.

While some might say her theme is repetitive or even boring, I say comfort lies in predictability, and makes Grackle a perfectly soothing channel. Also, she has an english accent which will make you smile.

First video you should watch: I Threw a 1980's Dinner Party for my Family

Channel: Kraig Adams

Kraig makes some of the most cinematically stunning videos I have ever seen. He usually posts half-hour long solo hiking videos set in gorgeous locations like Iceland and Alaska. The places he travels to are simply unbelievable, and the videos are completely silent. No chatty voice over, not even any clips of him talking to the camera, just the sounds of nature, and a meditative soundtrack in the background. These videos made me long to go backpacking when we were stuck in quarantine, and each new trail he hikes gets added to my bucket list.

These are such soothing videos, and sometimes I even watch them to help me fall asleep.

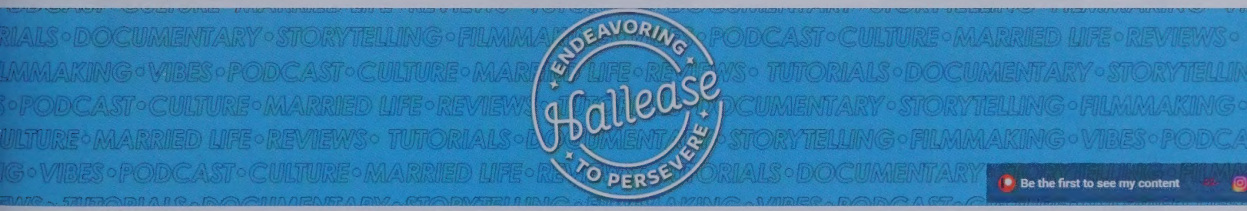
First video you should watch: Hiking 25 Miles on the Mardi Himal Trail in Nepal. This video features a small wite dog that hikes with him. It's very cute.

Channel: Baumgartner Restoration

Okay, this one is a little weird. I think I binged these videos during junior year when my life felt very cluttered and uncontrollable, but I always felt a little better after watching one of Baumgartner's videos. On this channel, Julian Baumgartner "opens a window into the world of painting conservation, sharing methods, theory and the delicate work of art," as his description says. Sometimes you just have to watch a gangly man in his 30's restore old paintings to their former glory, you know?

Many of the videos are set to classical music, but others feature a voiceover where Julian explains the restoration process of a particular painting as he fixes it up. These types of videos are my favorite. When I really need to clear my head, these videos give me something to focus on, and I always feel like I am learning something.

First video you should watch: Big Isn't Better, It's Just Better; The Restoration of St. Francis



Channel: Hallease

I just recently started watching Hallease's videos but I can already tell they are going to get me through college. Her channel features a diverse array of video topics covering pretty much anything you can imagine, but my favorite videos are the ones where she talks about her (many) plants. This woman has quite the green thumb and she makes me want to buy more plants every time I watch a video.

Hallease is comforting because of her calm voice and demeanor. She is professional, but approachable, for even content that discusses personal finance or her producing job are understandable and engaging. She is the kind of adult I hope to be.

First video you should watch: House Plant Tour 2020 // I need Your Help Identifying a few Plants

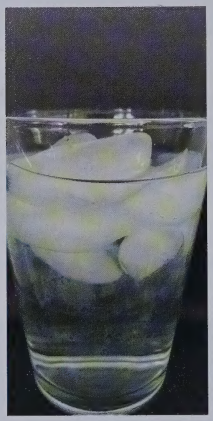
the DRIP

written and designed by
EMMALYN MEYER

In my opinion, nothing goes better with a meal than water. When it comes to eating out, I can definitely be classified as the "just water for me" customer. It's the cheapest option, the healthiest pick, and, honestly, I'm not big on soft drinks - the fizziness turns me off. But I can say that, unlike men, not all water is created equal. Well, maybe it's created equal, but it sure doesn't taste the same everywhere you go! And it's not always free, either.

For that reason, I'm determined to find the best cup of ice water that a fast food restaurant can offer. My grading criteria will include the following: price of water, taste, type of ice, and where it falls on the pH scale. I don't anticipate that any will hit a pH of 7, though. This is not a formal investigation into the kind of water that each restaurant uses, nor why or how they choose to offer that kind; I am solely interested in what water provides the best wash-down of a meal. I will be testing the ice water served at 8 restaurants in Southwest Fort Wayne, ranging from inexpensive to pricey fast food.

MY HOUSE



I wanted to start with the most subpar cup of water that comes for free: the tap water at my house. I live out of the city limits, so I drink well water. It doesn't cost a dime, but there is an odd fizziness and biting taste that is about as close to soda water that tap water can get.

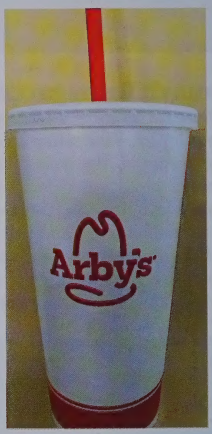
Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

WENDY'S

Wendy's is probably my favorite fast-food establishment, so the quality of the water was even more disappointing to me. The water itself had no clear taste, so it embodied the flavor of the paper cup that held it. It was not terribly enjoyable with my chicken and fries. I think I'd get a Frosty for 1.29 instead!

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

ARBY'S



I have a soft spot for Arby's, due to nostalgia and the high-quality food vs. low prices tradeoff, but after my paper-water experience at Wendy's, my expectations were low. However, the water was delicious, cold, and refreshing and it reminded me of why I embarked on this journey in the first place.

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

STARBUCKS

Starbucks blesses the taste buds with a smooth, almost perfect taste. It does appear to have a strange aftertaste, and it doesn't have the capability to wash down a meal as other restaurants do, given Starbucks' product list. Despite that, it's a worthwhile cup of water if you're ordering food or an extra-sweet drink.

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

DUNKIN'

Try as I might to be unbiased, I must mention that I am an employee of this franchise. Now - biased, of course - I have to say that it's some of the best-tasting tap water around. However, it comes at a premium of 50 cents for some inexplicable reason, and I can't justify spending money on tap water.

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

MCDONALD'S

So... I won't lie. I went to McDonald's for fries and water twice, and both times, I was handed a cup of Sprite. I'm not big on carbonated drinks, and I was so confused as to why I was just given a different drink that cost more for the same price. I'm kind of afraid to order water from Mickey D's again.

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

TACO BELL

This cup of water had a familiar taste, or lack thereof, which normally would bode well; however, even with ice, it lacked an undefinable component that prevented it from reaching its full level of refreshment. Nevertheless, I still enjoyed it as a complement to some of the Bell's spicier offerings.

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

CHICK-FIL-A

True to their charitable nature, Chick-fil-A offered free water, and with the combination of a Styrofoam cup, perfectly crunchy ice, and perfectly smooth water, this had to be the most enjoyable icewater for me. I forgot to order it at first, but they had no problem with me getting it at the window!

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

FIVE GUYS

Five Guys's water tasted like the smell of an indoor waterpark. This was the only contender that came from a Coca-Cola Freestyle machine, and it was disappointing. I would instead recommend getting the upcharge for one of too many soda flavors or treating yourself to a nice milkshake!

Rating out of 5 *chef's kiss* emojis:

EARTH DAY

written and designed by
CLAIRE ELLIOTT

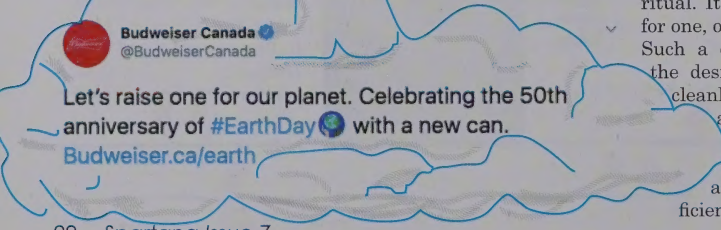
Created in 1970, the Dawn of the Contemporary Hippie, Earth Day grows in popularity each year. It serves as a reminder of one's environmental sins; with it, then, comes repentance and promises of change.

Unfortunately, when Time battles habit, habit often wins. In other words, there is a disconnect between our goals and our actions. For example, I hope to use less paper towels yet will frequently pick them up over a reusable dish towel. Moreover, as COVID-19 is still a threat for many, plastics are more common to reduce germ transactions. Even when COVID-19 will become manageable, it can simply be easier to pick a plastic water bottle than to prepare a reusable one.

Earth Day's "greatest contributors" do not help this attitude of indifference. The majority of Earth Day celebrations are simply advertisements put out by various companies. Starbucks, for example, has an Earth Month Game and Earth Month merchandise made from recycled material. They even introduced the Odyssey Blend, where the beans come from areas with responsible farming practices. Granted, this is a step-up from previous blends, the company does not actually specify what these"responsible farming practices" are. It takes at least ten minutes to rewire to a site called "From Bean to Cup," where the process of the beans' cultivation begins with a journey from the Malawian farms to the Seattle headquarters.

However, the actual farming practices (and their environmental effects) are still murky. Upon further research, though, there is a presentation on Starbucks's carbon footprint, water usage, and waste, among others.

Ultimately, for the vastness of the Starbucks empire, the company is quite transparent and quite clean. Most companies, though, are not; and it is quite clear in the advertisements. In fact, there appears to be a sort of morbid humor in them. Take Budweiser's tweet "Let's raise one for our planet. Celebrating the 50th Earth Day with a new can." The can does not have any cleaner features. Supposedly, "part of the proceeds" went to Earth Day Canada. I could find no statistical information on the subject.


Budweiser Canada
@BudweiserCanada
Let's raise one for our planet. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of #EarthDay with a new can.
Budweiser.ca/earth

In fact, those who speak most vehemently on Earth Day often have (a) a capitalist agenda, (b) a political agenda, or (c) a tendency to be self-righteous. It is no surprise, then, that Earth Day is a desensitized subject to many.

With such desensitization, comes a lack of action. For Earth Day to truly succeed, there needs to be a real celebration.

Celebrations are the basis of our society. Funerals, parades, and ceremonies reverberate throughout our history, bouncing off different cultures and reforming across space and time. They are the human expression, and, in turn, creation of meaning.

Moreover, celebrations of the Earth are the most common. Whether cultures thank natural deity, an all-supreme Creator, or simply nature itself, Earth has always had her offerings. Earth Day, then, needs not one ritual. It can be a plastic cleanse for one, or a solitary hike for another. Such a celebration would reinvigorate the desire to respect the Earth and live cleanly. Nancy Bogdanowitz, the Earth Space and Environmental Science teacher, works to live a greener life every day.

"You try to buy fuel-efficient cars. When we buy new appliances, we try to make sure that they are energy efficient. The less electricity you use, the lower your bills are.

MRS. MERKLING'S FUN FACT

"DID YOU KNOW THAT SQUIRRELS ACTUALLY COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR TAILS? ALSO, SQUIRRELS DO NOT DIG UP ALL OF THEIR NUTS, WHICH, IN TURN, INCREASES THE TREE POPULATION!"

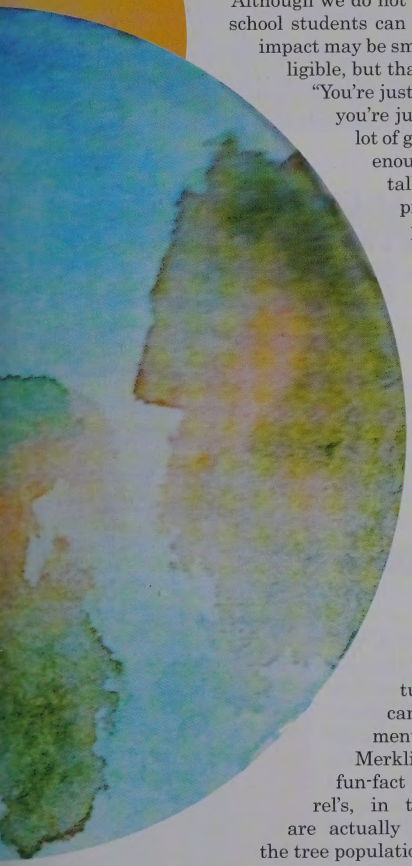
Try to keep it a little cooler in the winter. It's a lifestyle," Bogdanowitz said.

Although we do not own any homes, high-school students can make an impact. The impact may be small, perhaps even negligible, but that is not an excuse.

"You're just starting to drive, and you're just starting to create a lot of garbage. You're now old enough to be [environmentally] aware. 'I should probably recycle that plastic water bottle, or I should probably get a reusable water bottle.' If we had more of a conscious effort to educate more kids than just those who take Environmental Science, that would be a wonderful thing," Bogdonawitz said.

To maintain this earth-oriented mentality, celebrate Earth day. Even just a simple recognition of Nature's intricate power can motivate environmental goals. Take Mrs. Merkling's delicious little fun-fact on squirrels. Squirrel's, in there ornery burials, are actually great contributors to the tree populations.

So, for Earth Day, create a ritual dedicated to squirrels. Burn incense and celebrate their mischevious hearts and mischevious tails.



A COLLAGE OF COLLEGE CHARACTERS

written by
ELYSSA HUFF
designed by Emmalyn Meyer

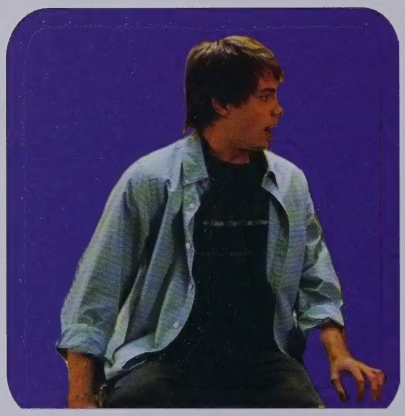
Every spring becomes an intense and strenuous time for most seniors, with an important decision looming over most of the season: the act of picking a college. It comes directly after college decision releases, which, for many seniors, likely did not turn out as hoped. With numerous factors to consider and because of the choice's ability to define the next four years of one's life, it can be an arduous process, full of ups and downs.

If you were to look at it solely through teen movies, however, you would never know this. It seems as though teenage college decisions are yet another aspect of adolescence for Hollywood to glorify and dramatize.

In honor of this time in seniors' lives, I thought I would take a look at the most egregious examples of college choices in teen-centric movies. Ranging from the amusing to the downright infuriating, this list is comprehensive of some of the worst offenders. Thank you, Hollywood.

AARON SAMUELS

Mean Girls

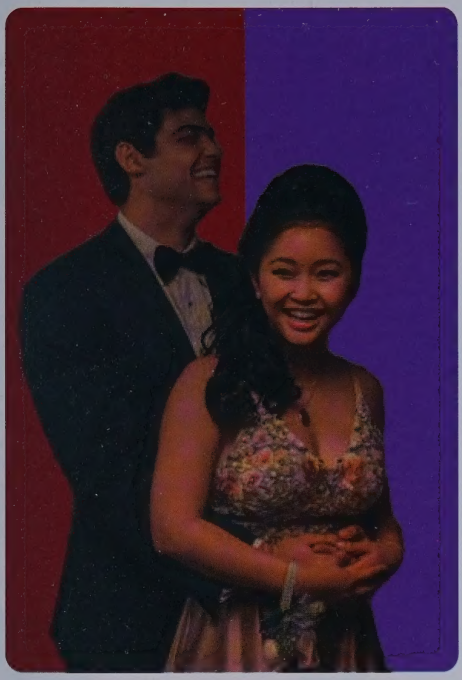


Regina George's ex-boyfriend Aaron's dumb nature is played up to such a point in the movie that his acceptance to one of the most prestigious universities in the country, Northwestern, comes as a real shock. Cady, the movie's protagonist, develops a crush on him in their math class, where she helps a struggling Aaron not fail calculus. His frat boy, oblivious, and non-studious persona throughout seems directly at odds with a selective school that emphasizes academic fulfillment, but alas. Northwestern '08!

TROY BOLTON

High School Musical movies

Floppy-haired heartthrob Troy Bolton's acceptance to UC Berkeley was one of the defining moments of my childhood, and one that inspired my interest in the school for years afterward. If Troy, a character who shows little growth or self awareness throughout, could get into Berkeley, how hard can it be? (Pretty hard, as it turns out.) The audience is given no indication of Troy's academic abilities, so while—based on personality alone—his admission to Berkeley seems unlikely, apparently it's not impossible.



LARA JEAN & PETER KAVINSKY

To All the Boys I've Loved Before series

Oh, these two. After an emotional rollercoaster of 3 movies, their saga seemingly concludes. Since the nonsense fun began, I guess it wouldn't make sense for their college decisions to be any different. Peter, Lara's boyfriend, is at Stanford, and Lara anxiously waits for her application results. When she is rejected from Stanford but accepted to her safeties (!) Berkeley and NYU, Lara dreads being forced to separate from Peter by going to NYU. (The agony of being forced to go to another Top 20 school. Sigh.) Watching this was just a reminder of how out of touch some of these directors are with typical students, and the emphasis on elite private schools was strange to witness too, due to the book colleges being UNC Chapel Hill and UVA. What the point of the change was, I could not tell you. Let's just hope we're all lucky enough to end up with a replacement Top 20 school as a safety.

NOAH FLYNN & ELLE EVANS

The Kissing Booth movies

These are perhaps the most infuriating college decisions in all of the teenage coming-of-age filmdom. At the end of the first movie, it is revealed that Elle's boyfriend, Noah—who has been suspended from school countless times for beating people up on school property and being an overall bad dude—is going to Harvard. Elle begins her senior year the following movie, with little thought given at all to college. Since her boyfriend goes to Harvard, she figures she might as well apply despite really wanting to go to Berkeley. As a result, we watch a montage of her applications, including writing her Common App essay (which is, admittedly, not good). After a muddled timeline of receiving college decisions after graduation, Elle learns that she has magically been accepted to both Berkeley and Harvard. Conflicted, Elle realizes that she has a decision to make. That a girl who has never before considered college gets into two of the most selective schools in the country, one of which she only applied to for her boyfriend, is inconceivable, but hey: at least we'll be treated to a third movie!

I understand the frustration of watching these: characters creators gave no indication were studious in any sense of the word going to elite private schools, seemingly with no difficulty. After a year of plummeting admissions rates and pervasive rejections, it's disheartening to see fellow teens on screen fail to replicate that reality.

Despite what Hollywood may say, we are not defined by our decisions. Events not working out in our favor doesn't indicate a lack of effort on our part, nor does it mean that we are alone after examples in movies. Seeing one dimensional characters in movies get into the colleges of their dreams (or having, tragically, to go to a different top 20 university) does not delegitimize our accomplishments for not necessarily doing so. Regardless of where we end up, we will turn out fine; I just wish teen movie makers knew that.

The kids will be okay, after all.

As Good as

wr
KATELY
designed by

ADMIT ONE

Killer Sofa

Keona Shear fell asleep during her first viewing of this movie. Her friend described the plot as, "Bland, uneventful, and illogical." She followed it up with, "A chair that looks like the Michelin Man falls in love with a girl and its bad."

IMDB Score: 3.6/10

The Bee Movie

"The Bee Movie drained the life out of me. [...] Who let Jerry Seinfelf write a kids' movie?" (Scouten 10).

IMDB Score: 6.1/10

Rotten Tomato Score: 49%

Audience Score: 53%

The Emoji Movie

While Jacksfilms may (ironically) stand by this movie, this movie is know for being a quick cash gra and an incredibly cringe viewing experience.

IMDB Score: 3.3/10
Rotten Tomato Score: 7%

Audience Score: 37%

ADMIT ONE

Cats

Veronica Scouten described the Cats movie as, having "horrifying [visuals] and some of the actors [...] can't sing. There's nothing for the movie to fall back on." "I [...] mourn what this film could've been."

IMDB Score: 2.8/10
Rotten Tomato Score: 19%

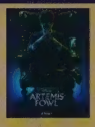
Audience Score: 53%

Percy Jackson

"There's not one single thing in it that will appeal to a person who has ever seen a mythological origin story before," says critical viewer, Todd Gilchrist of H Magazine.

IMDB Score: 5.9/10
Rotten Tomato Score: 49%

Audience Score: 53%



Artemis Fowl

On an anonymous internet threa discussing bad movies, one use claimed that, "Everything [...] w completely made up, [...] and i portrayed in a way that would fe condescending to a five year old

IMDB Score: 4.2/10
Rotten Tomato Score: 8%

Audience Score: 19%

ADMIT ONE

The Garbage Pail Kids

As someone who personally remembers this movie from growing up, it is literal garbage. It will traumatize any children watching and will leave parents and older siblings bored out of their minds

IMDB Score: 2.6/10
Rotten Tomato Score: 0%
Audience Score: 27%

Mars Needs Moms

If you think the Polar Express was disturbing, Mars Needs Moms takes the Uncanny Valley effect to a whole other level. With gross character designs and even grosser moments, you'll be shocked to learn that this was produced by Disney!

IMDB Score: 5.4/10
Rotten Tomato Score: 37%
Audience Score: 40%

Plan Bee

There's no review needed here. Just taking one look at the animation will leave you screaming for help. Danny Gonzalez deems this the "worst movie ever." I doubt you'd disagree.

IMDB Score: 1.3/10
Rotten Tomato Score: N/A
Audience Score: N/A

Burnt Popcorn

by
BORSKI
yn Styborski

TIER 1

Description of Movies:

This tier contains movies that are genuinely confusing. You may find yourself asking questions.

How did this get made?

How did I get to this point?

Why am I watching this?

Why can I not bring myself to turn off the TV?

TIER 2

Description of Movies:

This tier is made up of movies that were based off of a previously exsisting story such as a book or a musical.

The original version had a good idea and then the movie ruined it.

All of these failed miserably.

Honestly, you might as well just watch the original, as long as this movie doesn't turn you off from it.

TIER 3

Description of Movies:

The movies listed in this tier are so bad that you can't even bring yourself to finish it.

Consisting of rip offs of popular animated movies and terrible excuses of children's content, including a Disney movie that's been swept under the rug, this tier is crazy.

If you're going to watch these, you're doing it specificaaly to hate watch it.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

THE SAUCE RACE

Find out which of the world's many various sauces is crowned victor of the Sauce Race and earns the title and crown of the Sauce King!

written and designed by
JACOB HOUSER

Across eons, throughout many millennia, man hath pondered many a prepostorous issue. Throughout each and every confounding mystery, the human race has persevered. No question has proved to be too hard to answer. Until, that is, the eternal question that burdens all who live on this planet climbed out of its wretched hole decades ago; that being, what is the best overall sauce on the planet?

To begin our investigation, one has to first ponder what could qualify as a sauce. A sauce is defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary as a condiment or a relish for food, or something that adds "zest" or "piquancy". By that definition alone, we can first make the inference that some condiments will be able to qualify for the sauce race- these condiments being the world's two most popular condiments- ketchup and mayonnaise. Mayonnaise, despite being an integral ingredient in a dark horse candidate to win the sauce race that has not yet been named, makes the cut over its cohort mustard due to its somewhat unheralded popularity as well as flexibility in the ways it can be used. However, it shouldn't be considered a candidate to win the sauce race- it should be glad it even made it in.

Next up are the more obvious candidates of the sauce race- popular dressings, sauces that literally have the word "sauce" in their names, so on and so forth. Some of the world's most popular sauces, like soy sauce, sriracha, France's 5 other "mother sauces", tartar sauce, barbeque sauce, buffalo sauce, steak sauce, and fry sauce make their appearances here. Lastly come popular dressings Ranch, Thousand Island, and Blue Cheese.

Now that mostly every reasonable candidate for the sauce race has been outlined, we can look at every sauce's origin and what it's known for. Ketchup was said to have originated in Vietnam as a fish sauce, and when the British encountered it during their many world escapades they decided they wanted to try and replicate the sauce for their own use. Ketchup is by far the world's most popular condiment and sauce, and to an extent, the same can be said about the world's most popular ketchup manufacturer, Heinz, but that doesn't quite make it the best sauce of them all.

Mayonnaise's origin is mysterious in that people can't really confirm a verdict of whether it came from Spain or from France. It's one of France's six mother sauces- the other 5 being bechamel, veloute, espagnole, hollandaise, and tomato. However, it didn't appear in any French recipes until the 17th century. meaning it is likely Spanish in origin despite its status in France as a "mother sauce" and its popularity in places such as the UK and the United States.

Soy sauce is of Chinese origin, created during the Han dynasty. Soy sauce originated as a method to stretch salt, which would have been expensive during the Han dynasty. it was also originally fish-based, but it soon became soybean based, replacing its predecessor soy paste as a popular condiment-slash-dressing.

According to some sources, Sriracha sauce comes from the Thai town of Si Racha, where a housewife named Thanom Chakkapak created a spicy sauce with a special recipe that called for vinegar, sugar, salt, garlic, and red jalapenos, around the late 1940s. This sauce was later replicated by Vietnamese immigrant David Tran in the 1980s, where it became extremely popular on the West Coast and later nationwide.

Tartar sauce originated in France as a sauce used to eat with Fish, and although recipes can vary quite a bit between each other, it has largely remained as a sauce that is put on fish and fish alone.

Barbecue sauce is often traced back to having its origins in American colonies, although some dispute where it might have came from. However, the modern iteration of what we would now call barbecue sauce originated post-World War II. Originally, most barbecue sauces only had vinegar, salt, and pepper, but gradually evolved to include ingredients such as sugar, ketchip, and Worcestershire sauce. Nowadays, barbecue sauce recipes typically vary based on what region of the United States you are in. Buffalo sauce comes from Buffalo, New York, which is (obviously) what it gets its name from. It was created when the owner of a bar, Terressa Bellissimo, created a sauce to test out on some wings she was making for her family. They loved it so much that they put it on the menu of their bar the very next day.

Steak sauce and fry sauce are both used as accomodations for the first half of their names. Steak sauce comes from the UK and Fry sauce comes from the United States, both sauces being invented to compliment their respective foods.

Lastly come our dressings. Ranch was created on a dude ranch in the 1950s, hence its name. Thousand Island originated in Thousand Islands, New York, as a sauce created by Sophie Lalonde, a fishing guide's wife, for a special dnner, in which everyone liked it so much she eventually decided to go commercial with it.

Now that we have our sauce candidates and their backgrounds laid out, we can move to their overall ratings. These ratings have multiple factors deciding them; those factors being my personal opniion of these sauces, outside opinion of the sauces gathered via survery, world popularity, most popular brand, and quality of the sauce's most popular brand. All of these will be compiled and showcased on the next page- so keep reading to figure out which sauce will be crowned as the One True Sauce King (spoiler alert: It's a super close race between Ranch and Soy Sauce).

The Sauce King Competition

Composite Reviews and Rankings

Ranch
Rating out of 10 (balanced over 10 surveys and my personal opinion): 9.5
World Popularity Level: Very High
Most Popular Brand: Hidden Valley
MPB Quality Level: Mediocre
OVERALL RATING: 9.5/10

Tartar Sauce
Rating out of 10: 3.5
World Popularity Level: Medium
Most Popular Brand: America's Choice
MPB Quality Level: High
OVERALL RATING: 4.5

Buffalo
Rating out of 10: 7.5
World Popularity Level: Low
Most Popular Brand: BWW Honey BBQ
MPB Quality Level: High
OVERALL RATING: 7.7

Steak Sauce
Rating out of 10: 8.0
World Popularity Level: Medium
Most Popular Brand: A1
MPB Quality Level: Very High
OVERALL RATING: 7.9

Barbecue
Rating out of 10: 8.7
World Popularity Level: Medium
Most Popular Brand: Sweet Baby Ray's
MPB Quality Level: Very High
OVERALL RATING: 9.1

Thousand Island
Rating out of 10: 4.1
World Popularity Level: Low
Most Popular Brand: Walden Farms
MPB Quality Level: High
OVERALL RATING: 4.7

Soy Sauce
Rating out of 10: 8.9
World Popularity Level: High
Most Popular Brand: Kikkoman
MPB Quality Level: High
OVERALL RATING: 9.4

Sriracha
Rating out of 10:
World Popularity Level: Very High
Most Popular Brand: Huy Fong
MPB Quality Level: High
OVERALL RATING: 9.1

Ketchup
Rating out of 10: 7.8
World Popularity Level: Very High
Most Popular Brand: Heinz
MPB Quality Level: Very High
OVERALL RATING: 8.1

Mayonnaise
Rating out of 10: 7.9
World Popularity Level: High
Most Popular Brand: Hellmann's
MPB Quality Level: Very High
OVERALL RATING: 8.1

Ranch is the official Sauce King! Congratulations to Soy Sauce on 2nd Place and Barbecua and Sriracha for a 3rd Place tie.

THE SPECTRUM

written by
KHARI HOEFELMEYER
designed by June Hill

A glimpse into the life of one androdygenous student at Homestead.

Feminine

Waking up is usually so much easier these days, just something about not needing an Ultra flavor Monster to wake up, wanting to walk through school and be seen. She will shower quickly and happily, dancing in the mirror while the water warms up and singing along to her feel-good, euphoria-factory playlist with Gorillaz, Megan Thee Stallion, and Ariana Grande as she blow-dries her hair. There is much less in her closet that fits this narrative, but still plenty to choose from. Usually, she will choose something pink or white, something with a tighter fit that reveals the soft skin with a dozen routines to maintain, even if it is just a tease. There is great confidence as she leaves the house, dressed up and make-up patted on like some sort of Gen Z, TikTok watching, edgy, socialite Barbie doll, her fruity perfume slightly stronger than regular days.

There is such a warm satisfaction in looking down to see a skirt swaying with the wind and dancing around her legs, neatly covered by some thigh high socks which mostly caught the attention of Conner and Katie. But she will look in the mirror a million times today to see that her eyelashes have fallen already, her face is a bit too chubby and lacks some definition, and her lips shrink too much when she smiles with her elementary school-grade crooked teeth. Most of the time, every hour that passes is another internal wish to go home. She no longer feels presentable. Her waist is not skinny enough and her shoulders are too broad, her eyeliner is not as perfect as this morning from looking around at all the other girls too much, the ones that had nicer figures, Gucci belts, and dark lashes that were probably falsies anyways (which at least they knew how to properly apply them).

She is much less likely to eat much today, she holds herself to a higher standard than to give in to such trivial rituals. Today it will be plenty of water and maybe a chicken strip or two once she is clocked in at work. She refuses to walk through the kitchen because she might become tempted, and she won't think too much about the blizzard flavors people order or she might make one for herself once the rush has died down. By 5 o'clock she is home, but by 7 she will feel her stomach drop at the sudden realization of how little it has been filled. Whatever she decides to eat, she better act fast because after 8 those calories could ruin her even more than they would at this hour. She'll decide she's craving one of the many frozen teriyaki chicken bowls in the basement freezer, her brain hyper-focused on the sweet and savory flavor from pairing the chicken and pineapple pieces. She'd carry it up to her room, already knowing she was changing her mind on being hungry, foreseeing herself throwing it away after taking three bites and setting it aside.

Masculine

Today he will wake up and never want to leave the bed, it is too warm under the blanket and the rest of his room will stab him with its chilliness. He will get up a bit later than his regular 6 AM alarm and go shower, never once looking down and avoiding the razor suctioned to the wall on his right. He will hate his haircut, but knows he can stop thinking about it once he ties it in a bun. He never felt like his parents understood how he was different, never able to ask for a binder. Instead, he will stretch on the one-size-too-small sports bra he told his mom he wanted for gym class, looking closely to make sure it flattens him enough. There is plenty more in the closet for him, an ocean of oversized hoodies, t-shirts he stole from his brother in middle school, and the one pair of cargo shorts that he loved so much. He will feel better by the time he looks as tired and unbothered as teen boys usually do, and today he might even spritz some of the cologne his brother's girlfriend unknowingly gave him.

At school, his first pick-me-up will be Katie telling him how good he looks today, assuring him that he looks masculine, saying he looks like he likes girls. Work will not go as well, but at least his apron being tied much looser than usual and not wearing the visor like the rest of his male coworkers will make customers question how to refer to him, usually ending in them not referring to him at all. He will go about the whole day fixing his posture and the way he is sitting: uncrossing his legs and spreading them out under his desk space, slouching his back more often, and resting his chin on his crossed arms as if he would rather be sleeping.

He is more prone to, well, stuffing his face. He refuses to eat at school, who wouldn't when the best foods from prior years are not available anymore, but surely his wallet will suffer another loss to get some McDonalds or Dunkin Donuts before work if he has time. If not, He will gorge on fries, chicken strips, he might even make himself a burger, and you bet there will be an immaculate, chocolatey blizzard creation at some point in his shift. By the time he gets home, his stomach might rumble, asking for more, but he will quiet it down long enough to make a Digiorno pepperoni pizza all for himself.

Androgynous

These are the most common days, feeling somewhere between or just far away from any certain gender. They do not have to worry as much about how they look as they can be whatever they want to be, the sky is the limit today. There won't be an intense pressure to get in the shower too fast, there is time to wake up and scroll through Instagram, finding all the weird cat memes and frog pictures in their feed because the system knows it is all they ever want to see. They will dress up a bit more today, aiming for a much edgier and alternative style, likely to have some chains hanging from the waist of their pants and a piece of citrine or rose quartz hanging from a spring cage for some extra good vibes. Of course, they will wear their more stylistic shoes as well, a pair of platforms, even if it is only the 1-inch baby pink pair. They have to move the seat back in their car so their legs are not too scrunched up, but it is worth it.

At school, they will feel all the eyes watching them. Conner calls most of their outfits weird, but it engages people, catches the eye and it is all they need to be on top of everything. The stress has been lifted today, the crystals absorbing any negativity they might come across, cleanses the mind as the day goes on. The school day will fly by, how could it not when there is so much energy trapped in them today, more talkative and productive from the time American Lit starts until Photography ends. Hell, they get to see their therapist today and tell them how they are trying so hard to move out from their parents' house and deal with their recent car crash, but at least today is a good day, there is something to be happy about for the moment.

They will also be running off low energy, mostly forgetting about eating or their usual cravings, but just eating their favorite chicken instant ramen with cheese when they think about it once after their daily (for the most part) 2 o'clock nap. They don't know why they just don't think too much about food today, there is just so much else around them to keep them going until they crash in the midday. They will always have those midnight cravings for Taco Bell's 5 Layer Burrito, hoping their mom (who is awake this late for what reason?) will let them go out and satisfy their sudden hunger at such an hour.

A Celebration of Poetry

compiled and designed by
MIKAYLA HAVISON

April is a beautiful month. After suffering through the bitter cold of February (and even March), it feels good to see flowers and life making their way to the surface. Naturally, the beauty of a world brought to life can be inspirational to all creatives who witness it. No wonder April is National Poetry Month. Here are some poems to help you celebrate:

poem from the editor

The poem I have chosen to share is one I wrote while trying to convince a friends that Scrabble is by far the best board game, as it contains many secrets of the universe.

Unscrambling Scrabble

Where a useless word becomes useful
That's where I want to be
In 100 telling tangled tiles
The dusty pages of a dictionary
Can be opened without touch
Or remain lost for all eternity
So many words you will
Never find
Never know
And never
Get
To
Be

poem from Elle

Elle Barnett (10) keeps their poems in an over 80 page document. Below is a poem she wrote about how "even one particle can destroy the universe."

Vacuum State

Resting
Dormant
A vacuum state.
Peaceful periscope
360 vision
And a vacuum state.
There is no movement.
There is no sound.
Potential used.
Wasted or not,
Here I am.
A vacuum state.
But one can't help but wonder
If the higgs field is false
And I've doomed us all.
And through a quantum tunnel
I gain so much movement
That impact would destroy us all
In the blink of an eye.
And the vacuum decay
Would change everything.
Chemistry
Physics
Astronomy
And me.

haikus from Carly

In her AP Government class, Carly Chen (11) enjoys writing haikus about her classmates. Here is one of her haikus about a classmate, as well as a Sparta-na-themed haiku.

Spartana

Spartana my love,
How I cry in excitement
Flipping your pages

Krishna

Oh heyo Krishna
Because of your charisma
You're now president

On April 29, the librarians will be handing poems out to students in the hallways. Make sure to grab one!

THE ONLY THING SPREAD FASTER THAN COVID-19 IS INTOLERANCE
DUPONT GUY
We Answered the Call!
OUR ROOTS. OUR SOUND.
Spotify
ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH
MISS SAIGON SERVES WHITE MAN'S
HONORING THE PAST. SECURING THE FUTURE!
I AM NOT YOUR SCAPEGOAT
STOP THE HATE
STOP THE VIOLENCE
STAND UNITED
INDIAN YOUTH AGAINST RACISM
WE AAPI
WE ARE
We Answered the Call!
BLACK POWER
We Answered the Call!
Check out our other articles on hhsspartana.com

Spartana

Issue 8 May 2021

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There's 104 days of summer vacation, and school comes along just to end it.
So the annual problem for our generation is finding a good way to spend it. Like maybe...

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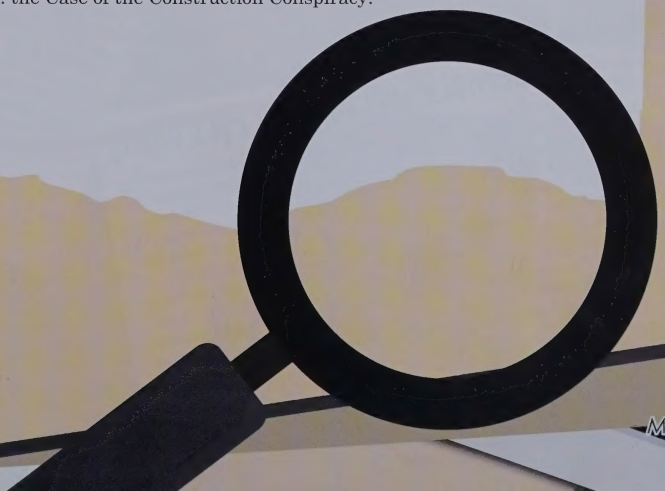
Unofficially reorganizing a list that barely anyone looks at anymore.

The Case of the Construction Conspiracy

written and designed by
THOMAS HILL

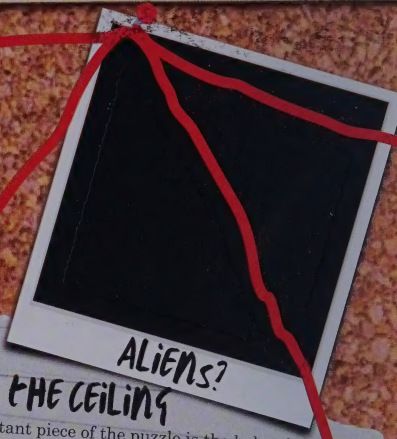
CONSPIRACY IS EVERYWHERE...

The name's Hill. Thomas Hill. My job is to ask the questions that no one- and I mean no one- is asking. This past month, I've been looking into the school's construction project, and what I discovered is unbelievable (like, so crazy you literally cannot believe it). The investigation I led is full of twists and turns that reveal the truth behind the Homestead construction project and behind the history of our school. You will be shocked, mystified, upset, disturbed, and concerned by these revaltions. Here's my groundbreaking evidence in... the Case of the Construction Conspiracy!



RED CARPET HALLS

Students have long been suspicious of the red-carpeted halls in the Freshman Academy. Barred off by heavy doors, few students have ever entered the dim halls. At least, no student has made it back out to tell the tale. I've kept a close eye on these halls for a while, and it was on a late night after the 8th-Grade Walkthrough that I saw the mysterious light emanating from those doors, similar to that of a blacklight. I carefully peeked through the windows and saw something no student should ever see- a teacher with strange, glowing, fluorescent markings all over their body. Clearly, aliens are masquerading as teachers in this very school! Just as I was about to creep away, a strange, fluorescent blue hand shoved me into a locker as the alien-teacher looked to where I had been moments before. This was the first time I encountered the ghosts, former students and teachers whose spirits linger in the old school halls, fighting off darkness and protecting current faculty and students. They refused to join the conspiratorial alliance of darkness at Homestead and have been targeted for destruction!



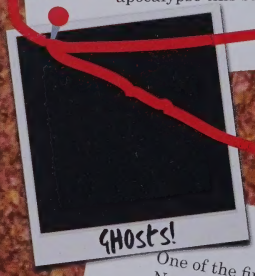
ALIENS?

HOLES IN THE CEILING

Another important piece of the puzzle is the holes that can be found in the ceiling all around the school. While some classrooms' tiles have been removed to hide these holes existence, a large hole remains in the Homestead weight room. Of course, there's only one logical explanation for these holes- mole people! Yes, there are mole people lurking in the ceilings, the walls, and under our feet. As we all know, moles are carnivorous and the mole people obviously need a new food source- and what better food source than bite-sized high school students? Keep an eye on the ceiling holes and you'll soon realize that the moles have created them to help justify the construction. It's all part of their bigger plan to centralize their new food source!

INCESSANT LEAKAGE

The school is also facing leakage issues. It seems that every time it rains, at least one of my classes has a bucket waiting to catch the water that drips incessantly throughout the day. However, it turns out these leaks are a side effect of the ghosts recent attempts to stop the aliens and moles. The leaks are actually the ethereal blood, sweat, and tears they've poured into countering the deadly threats to our school. So next time there's a leak, be thankful, because it's actually the ghosts delaying the inevitable apocalypse this school will face.



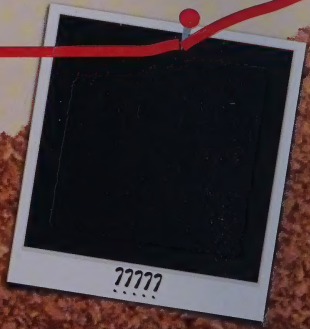
GHOSTS!

SUSPICIOUSLY FAST PARKING LOT COMPLETION

Unlike most of the construction, the new parking lot was finished extremely quickly, even ahead of schedule. While the mundane thinkers attribute this to students "needing somewhere to park," I know the truth. The mole people are in fact using the parking lot to corral more victims in a single location. Rather than having us spread out around numerous lots, a single, cramped lot allows them to attack their prey at one time. The conspiracy grows deeper every day, and the mole people have rushed the parking lot to better feast upon us.

DEMOLITION OF HEALTH ROOMS

One of the first parts of the school to go was the health classrooms. Now why would this part of the building be removed so quickly? Because I was on the aliens' trail, discovering that they were communicating out of those very classrooms, they needed to destroy the disguised pieces of the crashed alien mothership. Tucked away far from students, the aliens thought that they were perfect hideouts, but had to order their construction lackeys to demolish them before I could expose the truth. The aliens have a tight grip on the construction company, so we can't trust them to overthrow this conspiracy for us. We must be proactive to stop them from eliminating all evidence of their existence before it's too late!



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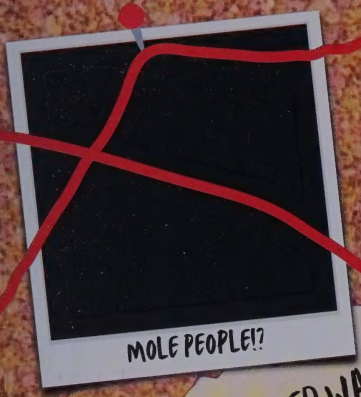


MOLE PEOPLE!?

SOFTBALL DIAMOND DIGGING

The aliens aren't the only ones with influence on the construction- the mole people have their claws in the company as well. You'll no- tice that a strange amount of focus has been put on completing the new softball diamond. I've been told that "the players need the field to be done ASAP," but that's another one of the lies surrounding the construction. The softball diamond was actually dug up because it was above the mole people's den of operations. They couldn't chance an average construction worker finding and uncovering their tunnels, so they abandoned them and ordered the digging to begin. This removed the biggest piece of hard evidence of the mole people's existence and plans, but I haven't let the lack of tangible proof deter me.The mole people will be brought to justice, and the construction conspiracy uncovered. I refuse to end up a midday snack for a mutant!

NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED WALLS

Returning students with classes in the 500s will have no- ticed the obnoxious new walls that were built to irrevocably change the hall structure. This is, of course, not standard construction procedure, but an act of the aliens among us. After the destruction of the mothership pieces in the health classrooms, the aliens needed a location to communicate with their homeworld and decided to occupy what was once a hallway. This gives them their own door with separate access, preventing students from stumbling upon their das- tardly deeds. I, of course, have not been able to access this new mothership, but that serves as further evidence that I am right! The aliens' new communication center allows them to coordinate with the rest of their species, which will undoubtedly end with the complete replacement of Hom- stead's student body by alien imposters!

REMOVAL OF ORIGINAL BUILDINGS (+MYSTERIOUS NOISES)

Problems associated with construction (and therefore our doom) seem to be popping up all across the original build- ings nowadays. However, they're not all bad. Remember the benevolent ghosts I encountered in the red halls? Well, they've been trying to warn us about the moles and aliens for longer than I'd realized. Some of the older classrooms, including room 719, have had some strange noises since the construction began. What I originally thought was associ- ated with the alien imposters turned out to be the ghosts warning us of the invaders posing as teachers. The spooky noises are in fact akin to giant warning signs. If you hear these noises, you're probably in the presence of an alien or being hungrily eyed by the moles. And that's why the original buildings are being removed- they're the only things tying the ghosts to the earth and allowing them to impede the devious construction conspiracy. If the halls that the ghosts once walked are gone, so too will be the ghosts, and our doom will draw nearer at exponential speeds!

MAJOR OUTLETS' REFUSAL TO COVER THE STORY

The final and most powerful piece of evidence is the refusal of all major and minor publications to pick up this story. Outside of the Spartana, no newspaper has even returned my emails, calls, and numerous texts. Everyone from the Journal Gazette, our local paper, to national papers like the Washington Post and New York Times have turned me down. News stations are no better. Our local WANE- 15 didn't dare expose the dastardly plot surrounding the Homestaed construction project they praised, and national outlets like CNN and Fox News also ridiculed me. It seems that the aliens have planted their eggs of destruction in every news organization around the country. Except, that is, the Spartana. Our brave staff has agreed to take on the challenge of reporting the truth (although they oddly in- sisted on adding a question mark after the news label). The conspiracy is deep, dark, and attempting to censor the truth!

CENSORED!

Report Conclusion:

And now you've seen the evidence- the conspiracy I've uncovered is shocking! The carefully planned renovations and remodels of Homestead point to nothing other than what we've all feared- ghosts have infected the original buildings, all while mole people plot to make Homestead students their new food source and aliens slowly take the place of teachers across the building. I've blown the lid off of a major conspiracy- all three problems are connected! The aliens and moles have united to use the construction to their advantage to hide their activities and dispel the ghosts that threaten to reveal them. And now, they're after me, trying to censor the press- no national or local stations or publications would accept my story and I know the conspirators are behind it! So spread the word using the Spartana- this has to get out before it destroys us all.

THE X COUNT

written by
JOHN DELY
designed by THOMAS HILL

For anyone interested in youth shooting sports, The X Count is a great place to start. The X count is known for many of their veteran and community events as well as being the home rifle range of the Bishop Dwenger and Carrol teams.

Even though they do not currently have a Homestead team, all students are welcome to participate. Athletes start off as a sporter, which means that they shoot a starter rifle without any special equipment. As athletes progress in the sport, they can choose to move up to precision, which is more competitive and provides more opportunities as it is shot on the olympic level. In precision shooting, athletes wear special shooting suits which offer support and shoot more precise rifles. Precision athletes also have the opportunity to shoot smallbore instead of the normal air rifle. Smallbore is shot at a longer distance (and sometimes outdoors) with a .22 rifle.

The X Count provides many opportunities that one cannot achieve alone. Unlike other rifle programs, The X count provides all of the equipment necessary to excel in the sport. Every year, many hard working athletes from the X Count have the opportunity to shoot at Junior Olympics as well as the National rifle match. In addition, many high school athletes from the X Count have moved on to shoot on a college level.

I first got into rifle because my brother, Mark Dely, was part of the team back in 2016. He was a strong leader and a team captain, and has competed at the national level, shooting at the Junior Olympics for several years in a row. Although he has now graduated, he continues to shoot rifle at the Naval Academy using many of the skills he learned from the X count. Even though he's away at college, I continue to shoot at the X Count, and work hard to become the strong leader that he was during his time on the team.

If you would like to participate in the upcoming 2021-2022 season, the X Count holds a summer camp for any beginners looking to try it out. You can contact the X Count with any questions with the following information.

Phone: 260-437-3860
E-Mail: thexcount@gmail.com
Website: http://TheXCount.com

THE X COUNT

Magistra Beckman

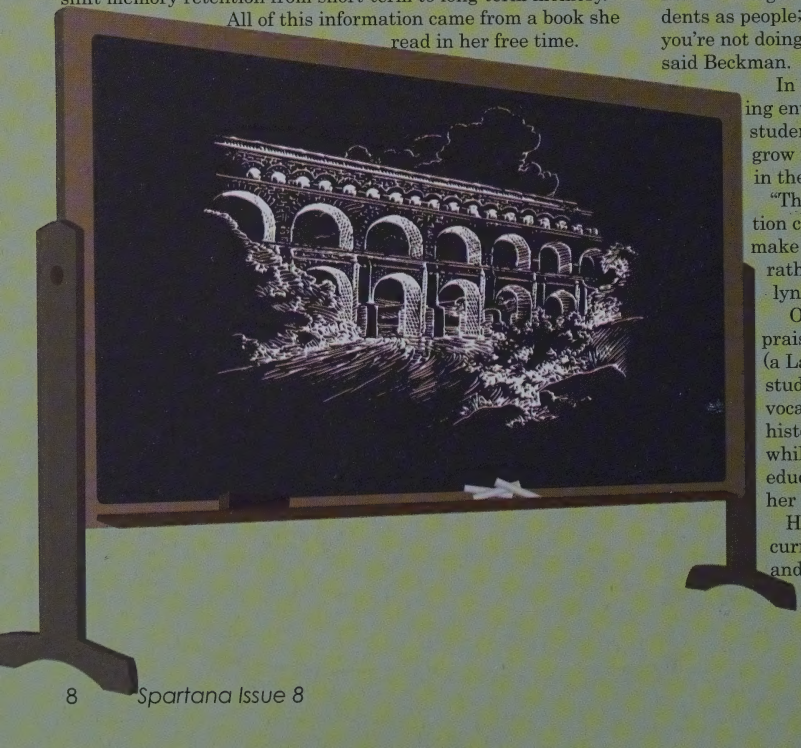
written and designed by
CLAIRE ELLIOTT

Megan Beckman, known as Magistra to her students, is SACS's Teacher of the Year. It is a just title for the Latin teacher. Beckman teaches Latin courses I and III at Homestead, Summit, and Woodside - a formidable load. This year, she even teaches Latin I and III through ESacs, meaning a complete set of assignments and videos ready for online students each week.

Beckman's influence, though, extends beyond learning the material; she commits herself to guiding students emotionally and academically.

"Not everyone is going to go on into Latin in college, but everyone can benefit from learning how you learn. I've definitely shifted in the last couple of years. Yeah, we do Latin, obviously, but we also make sure that students understand how they can make connections to other classes and how they learn," Beckman said.

As a Latin student of year IV, I can attest to Magistra Beckman's methods. Once, she gave a presentation on methods that shift memory retention from short-term to long-term memory. All of this information came from a book she read in her free time.



Moreover, Latin class becomes a sanctuary for students, rather than an arena. Since my first introduction to Latin, in 2016, she has made the course engaging while retaining an environment of peace. I, among other students, do not walk into a Latin room with dread, but with comfort and contentment.

"Whenever I'm struggling with stress or need a simple pick-me-up conversation, Magistra is the first teacher I go to, and I'm so grateful for her support and care," Lauren Cabe (11) said.

Much of this support comes from the core of Beckman's teaching philosophy, which emphasizes the student rather than the schoolwork.

"Students often put a lot of pressure on themselves. Yes, school is important, but you're a person first. You should make choices that honor that, especially this year. If it's Latin homework or sleep, choose sleep. Yes, its good to have high standards, and I am not lowering my standards [of students.] I think being more understanding and accommodating of students as people; trying to keep in mind there might be a reason you're not doing homework that has nothing to do with Latin," said Beckman.

In this way, Latin becomes a collaborative teaching environment; Beckman always supports her students and gives them opportunities to learn and grow from mistakes. As a result, the students engage in the class.

"The games [Beckman] uses and the fun translation content make Latin feel more like a fun learning experience rather than a simple diploma requirement," Carolyn Chen (11) said.

One of such games includes a gadget worthy of praise: buzzers. Beckman sets up her certamen (a Latin trivia) buzzers before class and allows students to partake in questions. They range from vocabulary and grammar to Roman culture and history. The room fills with vigorous competition while retaining an air of easy-going fun. All of this educational enjoyment comes from Beckman and her commitment to her Latin discupuli (students).

However, Beckman does not stagnate in her current success. She strives to grow as a teacher and cultivate her teaching techniques.

"I'm trying to do more project-based assessments because they're fun and you guys were all so creative. You can show what you know and have fun with it," said Beckman.

Teacher of the Year

Other teachers, too, notice her passion and determination.

"I appreciate working with Mrs. Beckman because she's very flexible, and she's so tech-savvy. We just work well together and kind of com plement each other with what we teach. She is easy to get along with and an advocate for the kids. I'm just so glad to have her here," said Ellen Waite, teacher of Latin II, IV and V. Beckman's greatest attribute, however, is not her ability to con students into caring about Latin, but her commitment to the students, in all spheres.

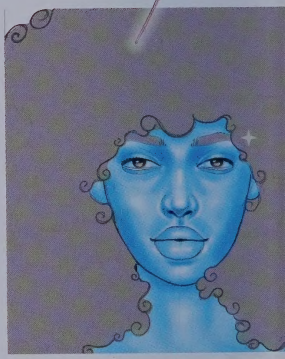
"Honestly, I think what makes Magistra such a good teacher is just how she cares about us as individuals," Chen said.

SPRING ARTS WEEK

written and designed by
MADELINE PHUONG

BBLE POP (DIGITAL) BY JORDAN SCHLATTER (12)

TARGETED ROYALTY (ACRYLIC) BY JORDAN SCHLATTER (12)



BLUEY (DIGITAL) BY JORDAN SCHLATTER (12

It's back! Spring Arts Week graces the virtual halls of Homestead High School for its 20th anniversary. In 2001, former Homestead English teacher and current substitute teacher Susie Johnson first introduced the idea of celebrating students' artistic achievements. Now, adapting with the times, the Spring Arts Week gallery is online via Google Sites.

"It's important to give students the opportunity to show their work to an outside audience — whether in the display cases throughout the year or during a formal art show," Visual Arts Department Chair and Fine Arts teacher Sarah Shatto-Jones said. "The feedback they receive from students and other faculty members is always so encouraging to them."

Jones added that the art show is also an opportunity for seniors to curate and present their own showcase. She most enjoys seeing teachers from other Homestead departments appreciate the work of fine arts students.

Although the National Honor Society's Coffeehouse will not be held with the art show this year, the online gallery contains much to be explored. From a feature on local art schools and careers to helpful tips on creating your own online portfolio, there are a plethora of exhibits to view. Anyone can access the online gallery, which launched on Friday, May 7.

For those interested in taking a fine arts class for the 2021 to 2022 school year, the Homestead Course Description guide is linked on the website's homepage. The Spartan Visual Arts Department offers 23 different art courses, including four Dual Credit classes and AP Studio Art.

"I really enjoy getting to see everyone's work in one place, where you have time to really take time to observe the little things each artist has done to make these varieties of work," Jordan Schlatter (12) said. Schlatter is one of three senior Spartans taking the AP Studio Art class. His portfolio of work, along with that of Autumn Bradfield (12) and Katie Murphy (12), is featured under the "Spring Arts Special Feature: AP Studio Senior Portfolios" section of the gallery.

For Schlatter, Spring Arts Week is a chance to reflect on the development of his artistic style throughout his high school career. He credited the Spartan Visual Arts department teachers and his peers for supporting and inspiring him to pursue art after high school. He added that, in the past year, he has experimented with new media, striving to assemble a portfolio that uniquely highlighted his "playful, adroit, and emergent" style.

His acrylic painting, "Targeted Royalty," was inspired by the discrimination and blindness that occur in royal politics, particularly as it relates to and affects the mental health of those who are targeted.

Schlatter also developed a digital collection created in Paint 3D. He added that digital drawing is an enjoyable and creative pastime of his during the school day, and he embraces digital art as the future.

"I have been able to develop a passion that continues to change me and steer me in my career path," Schlatter said.

ACCESS THE ONLINE GALLERY HERE!

Every year, two student works in the Spring Arts Gallery are chosen by Dr. Phil Downs for the Superintendent's Art Award. The recipients' works are professionally framed and displayed in the Southwest Allen County Schools Central Office for the 2021 to 2022 school year. The Superintendent Art Award recipients this year are Amar Haskic (11) for digital art and Serena Buszuwksi (10) for her embroidery piece, "Connection."

"(I was) inspired by my internal desire to reject civilization and connect with nature. It may sound very strange, but I've always loved nature and dream of living off the land out in the wilderness when I move away from Fort Wayne," Buszuwski said.

She told that, while winning the award was unexpected, she appreciates being recognized for her hard work. Having taken Fiber Arts and Ceramics, Buszuwski plans to further explore fine arts classes at Homestead, especially because her teachers are extremely supportive in helping to expand her creativity and test out new media.

"I am very honored that other people enjoy my art as much as I enjoy creating it," Buszuwski said. "Growing up surrounded by painting and an encouraging creative atmosphere has made art very important and influential to me."

Additionally, the 2020 to 2021 recipients of the Spartan Visual Academic Arts Awards were announced on Wednesday, May 12. The department selected nine fine arts students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their creative vision, artistry, craftsmanship, use of media, attitude, and work ethic. The Academic Arts Award categories are as follows: Spartan Visual Arts Overall Department Winner, Excellence in 3D Art, Excellence in Ceramics, Excellence in 2D Art, Outstanding Underclassman in Art, Excellence in Photography, and Excellence in Digital Design.

CONNECTION (EMBROIDERY) BY SERENA BUSZUWSKI (10)

DIGITAL ART BY AMAR HASKIC (11)

Mrs. Sarah Shatto-Jones

Art Dept. Chair

Classes: Intro/Adv 2D, Drawing, Painting, Art History, Beg Darkroom Photography, AP Studio Art, 2D Independent Study

Mrs. Lisa Ricker

Classes: Film/Video, Beg/Adv Fiber Arts, Intro/Adv 3D

Clubs: Basketry, Film

Mrs. Cindy Husar

Classes: Beg/Adv Ceramics, Intro/Adv. 3D, Beg/Adv Jewelry, Intro to 2D, Sculpture

Mr. Dominick Manco

Classes: Beg/Adv Darkroom Photography, Beg/Adv Digital Photography, Beg/Adv Digital Design, Viscom

Mr. Sam Welch

Classes: Intro to 2D, Intro to 3D, Beg/Adv Ceramics

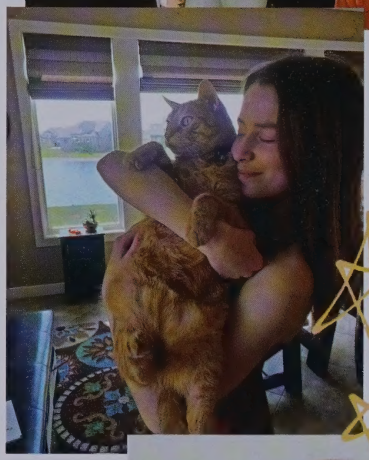
The purpose of Spring Arts Week is "to highlight the talents in the entire Fine Arts community at Homestead, including the Visual and Performing Arts department."

~Sarah Shatto-Jones

ACCESS THE ONLINE GALLERY HERE!

Finally, a special thanks to the Homestead Fine Arts Department teachers: Sarah Shatto-Jones, Lisa Ricker, Cindy Husar, Dominick Manco, and Sam Welch. Without the endless encouragement of these individuals, Spring Arts Week would not be possible. Their dedication allows the flourishing of countless Spartan fine arts students.

Staff Senior: Mikayla Havison



Since I designed my first ever senior farewell spread for Arika Akin and Michal Spanjer my freshman year, I always thought writing one of these would be an impossible feat. But as I sit down to write this, I feel a sudden sense of clarity. I know what I need to say.

It was good. The Spartana was good. High school was good. Life for the past four years was good.

I know "good" is a simple term- the type of word your third grade teacher would mark on your paper with a red pen beside the word SYNONYM written in all capital letters- but good is honestly the best word I can think of.

Oftentimes, when we reach the end of something, we have the desire to look back at it with rose-tinted glasses, pretending the extraordinary happened when it frankly did not. A lesson high school taught me, though, is that a rose tint only causes you to become stuck in the past; instead, you should assess what was great, what straight-up sucked and what was mediocre and then, take the time to grow.

For me, the great parts of high school were bountiful. Feeling like Sherlock Holmes, while writing a story for the Spartana about cows (even though nobody read it) was great. Going to Indianapolis, Chicago and Japan with my best friend was great. Cooking cheesecake with my physics partner after a stressful week was great. Finding out I got a full-ride scholarship to my dream school and crying with my family around the computer was great.

While the great parts certainly made the last four years more than bearable, there were also moments that just sucked. Learning my mom had breast cancer sophomore year was terrible. Constantly feeling like my voice did not matter at Homestead or in the community was terrible. Crying over assignments during the wee hours of the morning was terrible. Even the pettiest thing like getting yelled at by a lady named Shelley for cold soup at my job was honestly terrible.

The great and the awful averaged out, though, and left me sitting where I am today- glad it happened, but ready to move on.

My advice for underclassmen is also follows:

Try to cut out anything with toxic vibes as soon as you can, but also recognize that at the end of the day there will still be times when you just want to quit. There will be times when you feel like your best is never good enough, people are never kind enough, and the end is never close enough. Keep pushing forward. I still do not know how, but it all worked out for me and it will work out for you too.

As I start the next chapter of my life at the University of Virginia, all I can say is that my high school chapter was good. The next chapter will be better.

Peace out, Homestead.

Mikayla will attend the University of Virginia in the fall!

Staff Senior: Julia Epling

Julia plans to study education at Miami University in the fall!

It's hard to imagine not writing and designing for the Spartana going forward. While we still have some time before graduation, my fellow seniors and I are no longer the staff of your student newspaper. To reflect on the past few years, I think it's fitting to share what journalism means to me.

Everything I learned from my teachers and peers has made me who I am as a journalist today. Meeting for countless interviews, the voice recordings taking up storage on my phone, hours spent in class editing spreads and stories and late-night pizza parties. Yet despite these memories, none were more influential than each time the Spartana pushed the boundaries of high school journalism.

Yet as journalists that's something we must do. We're dedicated to telling the truth, so while not everyone wants to tell the truth about vaping, push COVID vaccination efforts, or go to a presidential rally, we have done it all. All of the stressful moments I faced were eased by my fellow staff members, the people I spent nearly every school morning with in the pub room. Somewhere along the way, they became more than just classmates, but rather friends.

It wasn't all serious, though. Some of our favorite stories were as simple as the infamous cafeteria cookie and cinnamon roll recipes, a reflection of Among Us, or recalling ceramic toads. I'm not sure how many stories I wrote for the Spartana, but I do know that the experience has given me more than I could have ever asked for.

I can only hope that I've given enough back. Working for this newspaper made me more compassionate and capable of seeing and understanding all sides of a discussion. It was a venue for intelligent, informed discussion without attack, even if we just debated what coming of age movies are the best, or which brand of peanut butter we prefer.

I am genuinely sad to be leaving the Spartana, and while I'm not sure if I'll continue with journalism in college, I do know that I will always read the Miami newspaper. I'd like to thank all the people who have made this paper possible. This includes, but definitely is not limited to, my fellow staff members, Mrs. Brehm, Mrs. Nowak, Gary and Mary from Fort Wayne Printing, and any other faculty members who have helped along the way. They are some of the most intelligent and hardworking people I've ever met. I feel incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to work with them over the past three years.

Staff Senior: ELYSSA HUFF

In the coming days, I know that I'll have to do a lot of thinking. Certainly, the future deserves some designation of thought; it is, after all, where I'm heading, at a pace probably too rapid for my liking. Procrastinating on that like I always do, however, leads me to my only other option: the past.

Even though I only joined the Spartana staff my junior year, I was involved in the journalism program every year of high school. I started from the bottom, as a lowly freshman in Journalism I, growing to become a senior member here. I grew from the basics of AP-style journalistic writing to in-depth analyses of Among Us and shape personalities. I know that I've grown significantly throughout high school, and journalism has been with me every step of the way.

I knew, going in, that I loved the truth. My blunt nature has definitely gotten me in trouble a few times, but it's also the reason I discovered journalism in the first place. In journalism, there's no room for lies; news is news, and there's no way around it. The classes became a way for me to exercise my truth-telling abilities, in a supportive environment that was so important to my development.

Throughout my years here I have to admit that I didn't really know what was going on most of the time. Like many others, I was a small fish in a big pond, floundering nearly every day. But that's perfectly normal. Before Covid, finding my place was a struggle; during and after, it became nearly impossible.

Spartana, though, became my place of refuge whenever I needed it. Whenever I felt especially lost or in over my head, it—and its people— was always there with welcoming arms and encouraging words. For that, I'm very grateful.

My three years here, at Homestead—much like the four years of so many other seniors—have been a rollercoaster ride, full of joys and frustrations, highs and lows, and Covid quarantines and jammed pep rallies. All things considered, they've certainly been the wildest ride.

I give many thanks to the teachers who got me through to this point—the ones who put up with me and my shenanigans for three years, never wavering in their support along the way. I had a strong support network throughout high school because of them, and for that I'm eternally thankful.

Regardless of wherever my future paths take me (whether that be lawyer or nightclub owner, or really anything in between), I'll look back fondly on my time as a Spartana staff member. I know that I've experienced so much growth in my time here, meeting interesting people and exploring my passion for journalism throughout.

Elyssa plans to study political science at the University of Ohio this fall!

Staff Senior: Emmalyn Meyer

I've always relished in my memories. I think I have an exceptionally large cavity in my brain dedicated to memory; ironically, I can't remember the technical name for that part of the brain. Nevertheless, I allow nostalgia to consume far too much of my time, because living vividly through my past is more interesting than experiencing the present. It's a bit of a pride point for me as well, as few others can picture every corner of a Lake Tahoe house they visited once as a three-year-old.

Throughout this year, I have been even more reflective than usual, because - I'll let you in on a fun fact about senior year - there are really only two items on your to-do list: put off every assignment until the last minute (or don't do it at all) and reflect on your life so far, usually for the indulgence of a college admissions official or English teacher.

Journalism has been, and will always be, a method of preserving history. As I page through the past issues of the Spartana that I've saved in a messy dresser drawer, I get glimpses of the past few years that had escaped even the airtight boundaries of my memory. What were we obsessed with in 2017? What was a controversial issue back then that seems to be present in every dinner table discussion today?

The Spartana is also a record of my personal growth. My first published story in our "Red Issue", where I intended to focus on a controversial aspect of the Homestead swim team, makes me laugh. I remember how terrified and awkward I was in my first ever interview - with a senior, no less! - but I see that my writing was promising from the beginning.

I recall psyching myself out before walking onto the astroturf lacrosse practice field to take some of the blurriest pictures of my life. I can picture my adviser, Mrs. Nowak, telling me that she "couldn't find a focal point" on my spread.

Some of my fondest memories from the newspaper took place after school at our work nights, where certain members had an entire pepperoni pizza to themselves, and the staff was a finely-tuned machine. I can find certain designs that I'd love to take credit for, but that I have to thank my editors and advisers for, as they spent our work nights scouring Pinterest and yearbooks for something I could rework.

While I reflect over my high school career, I can't help but think about where I was exactly four years ago, as I wrapped up my eighth grade year. I hadn't thought enough about the months ahead to be afraid, I had strong relationships with my closest friends, and the vaguest idea of what I would do after high school eluded me, but I couldn't take my mind off of the future.

I'd like to think fourteen-year-old Emmalyn and eighteen-year-old Emmalyn are two entirely different entities, two distinct personalities, but, truthfully, not much has changed. Sure, I have very different interests today, our styles are worlds apart (at least, I hope so), my music taste has changed no less than ten times and I have a plan and a passion that I lacked then.

However, I still use far too many commas, and I know all of them are placed correctly; I put too much effort into being the perfect student, but give up on something when I'm not immediately gifted in that area; I've perfected the art of sarcasm to the point where it's my worst habit and best coping mechanism; I'm a people pleaser to the extent that sometimes, I don't even know what I want. In eighth grade, I told my Skills teacher that I wanted to go to Arizona State University, and I made that happen this year.

So, where does that leave me today? I can say with absolute certainty that being on the Spartana staff put me in a better position to find out things about myself and push myself into areas of discomfort. I'm better for it. So much so that I don't mind donating some extra cognitive space in my brain to the memories I've made in my years in the Publications room.

Emmalyn will study Business (Public Service and Public Policy) this fall and is in the honors college at Arizona State University!

Staff Senior: June Hill

In my three years on the Spartana staff, I have made a lot of fun memories. We've had work nights full of pizza and furious editing, afternoons spent baking cookies and carving pumpkins at Mrs. Nowak's (our previous, and much loved publication teacher) house, adventures in Washington D.C and Chicago during journalism conventions and busy mornings spent scurrying around school delivering copies of the latest issue. It is easy to say I will never forget my time on staff.

And while it has been a lot of fun, I have learned a few things too. Mainly, I discovered a passion for graphic design. Before sophomore year I did not know I had it in me to obsess over the look of a spread for hours, or scroll through seemingly endless pages of fonts to find the perfect one. Three years of that, and I now know more than I care to about InDesign and Illustrator, (although, admittedly, Photoshop remains a mystery to me).

Also, I have learned that I am not particularly good at spelling, which is ironic if you know who my father is. Don't worry Dad, I'm working on it!

Over the years, I have worked on many stories, but perhaps my favorite piece I ever wrote for the Spartana was The J List. I had so much fun each month coming up with a new topic that was just the right mix of goofy and controversial. I always loved getting responses from readers-- seriously, you guys always made my day. I do not know if The J List will continue past my time at Homestead. I will miss writing that strange column, but that is okay. We certainly had a good run.

I will also miss all the wonderful people on this staff. I have found some amazing friends because of the Spartana, people who never fail to make me laugh and who I can't wait to watch as they succeed and grow into themselves over these next four years. To all the seniors who had a hand in making the Spartana come to life this year, I wish you the best of luck.

I don't know if I am supposed to give advice here, but I am going to. Perhaps my greatest takeaway from being involved in the Spartana is the realization that it's okay not to know what you are doing. I learned this in countless interviews where I was not confident in my interviewing abilities, I learned it over hours spent watching InDesign tutorials on YouTube and I learned it as an editor-in-chief.

Hardly anyone ever knows what they are doing. If you ever meet someone who claims to have actually executed their five year plan, they are not to be trusted, and are definitely a robot. Right now, I am about to graduate high school with no idea what will happen over the next four years, and I could not be more excited.

I do have a bit of a plan. I will be pursuing something to do with the humanities at Reed College in Portland, Oregon this coming fall. It is a tiny school, smaller than homestead, full of weird kids like me who just want to talk about books and music all day.

My major is undecided, and life after college is even more unclear, and for now that is good enough. I have my whole life ahead of me to figure it out. So have patience with yourself, you don't need to have a plan all the time.

June will attend Reed College in Portland, Oregon this fall!

THE MONKEY GUIDE

written and designed by
Luke Land

There are many animals in the world, about 8.7 million. Out of all of those species, monkeys are a small few of them. This monkey guide will give you anything ou need to now about monkeys. From general facts, specific facts about certain species of monkeys, and other random facts, as well.

Monkeys grooming each other to build the relationship.

A group of monkeys sitting around, one eating a banana.

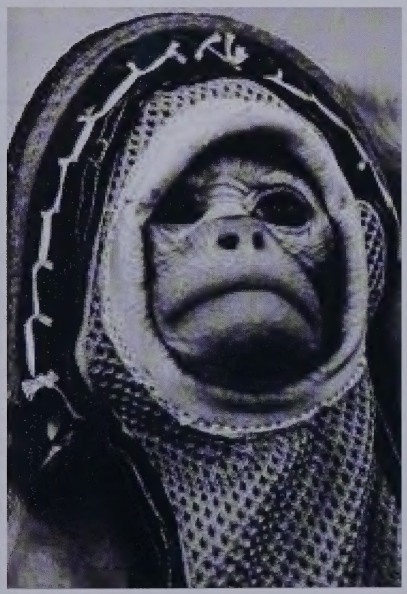
General Facts

- 264 types of monkeys
- They're categorized into two groups
- New World - Central and South America
- Old World - Africa and Asia
- They groom each other to strengthen relationships
- New world monkeys have prehensile tails, which are long tails that can grip onto things like branches
- They can understand numbers, and few and do multiplications
- The newest breed of monkey discovered is Lesula monkey, 2007
- The tip of the tail is bare skin, which acts like human fingertip
- The fastest monkey is the Patas, which can run 34 mph
- The Owl/Night monkey is the only nocturnal New world monkey
- Monkeys are everywhere besides Australia and Antarctica
- They can survive 10-50 years
- Group can be called troop, barrel, cartload, carload, and/or tribe
- They are as smart as toddlers; they can understand numbers, and few and do multiplications
- Apes and monkeys are similar, but not the same, kind of like distant relatives
- There is only one breed of wild monkeys in Europe, being the Barbary Macaque
- Not all monkeys live in trees - grasslands, high plains, and mountains
- Monkeys are omnivores, eating fruits, insects, flowers, and leaves
- Most New World monkeys cannot see any colors
- Brazil has the most species of monkeys
- Most common species are grivet, the rhesus macaque, and the crab-eating macaque.
- The rarest monkey breed is the golden marmoset, with only 1500 still alive

Specific Facts

- Pygmy Marmosets are the smallest species, while mandrills are the largest
- Pygmy Marmosets can leap 15 ft into the air
- Squirrel monkeys smear food on their tails and that act like name tags
- Burmese sneezing monkey sneezes every time it rains
- Monkeys in Japan groom and share food with deer in exchange for rides
- Mandrills have longer fangs than lions
- The Uakari is the most unique and one of the rarest monkeys on earth
- They have red very red faces and females choose to mate with based on how red their face is
- Spider monkeys are the most acrobatic,jumping up to 35 ft
- The Diana money is named after the Roman goddess, Artemis, the goddess of hunting
- The male Howler monkey has the loudest call of all monkeys
- Baboons have their own language

The Uakari, sitting on a tree stump looking along the horizan.



Albert the Monkey, ready to go into space, in June 1948.

Fun Facts

- A woman from Colombia claims a colony of capuchin monkeys raised her
- Apes, gibbons, lemurs, and chimpanzees are not classified as monkeys, but rather as primates
- Humans did not come from monkeys, but they evolved from a common ancestor
- The first monkey in space was a Rhesus Macaque named Albert
- Ancient Egyptians considered Baboons to be sacred
- In Ancient Egypt, baboons were police officers
- Japanese Macaque are the only monkey breed to wash their food
- Humans took this method from monkeys because of research in the 1940s
- "Uncle Fat" is a monkey in Thailand that is overly fat
- Tourists gave him junk food and soda
- The monkey is the 9th Chinese zodiac sign
- HIV originated from a chimpanzee's stomach

THE ISSUE WITH MODERN HORROR

The Successes and Failures of one of Today's Most Popular Genres

written and designed by
JACOB HOUSER

Horror is and has always been one of the world's most popular genres of all sorts of media ever since its conception. Many a man (or woman) have read stories filled not only with great suspense but also haunting stories that inspire fear within the hearts of many. The genre has been around for more than 200 years to this day, meaning there are countless quality horror stories to pick and choose from. And yet, even with all of that material to reference as well as the presence of an unlimited amount of creativity and material in the case someone were to make their own story, modern horror movies and games seem to be lacking. Why is this the case?

One of the very biggest successes with the modern entries of the horror is the attempt of some horror movies trying to put themselves on a pedestal above other entries in the horror genre, a trope called "elevated horror". The concept of elevated horror is sickening in definition alone; the purpose of the entire genre is to create a theme or a lesson or some sort of meaning taken away at the end of the film that is addressed as more intelligent or more complex than a normal horror movie. This has done wonders for modern horror, as movies such as *Us*, *Get Out*, and *Hereditary* have received largely positive reviews and much popularity.

However, now that this trope has seen success, it feels as if too many movies attempt to emulate it, to no avail. With the large success of this new elevated horror genre, classic horror has very much fallen under the metaphoric bleachers of the horror genre. While the common classics such as *Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Friday the 13th*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and more are still held in extremely high regard, it seems as if modern horror has moved away from the slasher genre and focused almost too hard on the supernatural and psychological horror genres.

With the utter disappearance and neglect of good slasher films from modern mainstream media, fans of the older horror movies as well as older generations are left behind, as the appreciation of today's supernatural and psychological horror often does not transfer over, despite supernatural and psychological horror being relatively popular in previous generations with the successes of films of the same respective genres such as Nightmare on *Elm Street* or *Psycho*. Since our parents' generation grew up on slasher films, it is clear that, more often than not, this is the type of genre they would want to watch when they want to see a horror movie- however, due to most studios focusing in on younger generations, it seems as if the slasher genre has begun to or simply already has died out.

Along with the death of the slasher genre comes the aforementioned abuse and overproduction of the supernatural and psychological horror tropes. In the supernatural genre, rarely do we see any film stray away from the typical "old evil demon without an adequate backstory decides it wants to kill people" trope, or the "evil cult begins its sacrifice to the devil" trope- and although this sort of thing has garnered a massive following with the release of popular films such as *Hereditary*, *Midsommar* and more, to some it is beginning to become overrated and overused.

However, this is not a universal thing- not every modern horror movie is a psychological thriller or a movie about a murderous supernatural force and it would be wrong to address it as such. What could be considered a more widespread trope throughout today's horror flicks is the common mishap of taking a concept that's only frightening for a short period and attempting to stretch it all the way out over the course of a full-length feature film. Popular movies with bad reviews like *The Bye Bye Man* and *It Follows* have reputations for doing this- It Follows is about a vengeful creature that will continue to follow someone until that someone is killed, and while it's an intriguing and creepy prospect, critics can agree it becomes overplayed and the adrenaline dies down throughout the film. *The Bye Bye Man*'s titular character, the Bye Bye Man, only appears in two scenes of his own movie, which is a huge hit point for critics and watchers of the film. All in all,

The final common trope within horror movies would be the presence of uncompelling and overpowered horror villains. In the aforementioned *Bye Bye Man*, the only way to stop him is to not think about him- and the characters have to think about not thinking about it to not think about it- which makes him relatively unstoppable. In the *Blair Witch* sequel, the only way to escape the Blair Witch is to sit in a corner and not look at her. If you look at her, you die, but she also is fully aware of the character's presence and there is no chance to escape, meaning even if a character managed to run into a corner, she would puppyguard said corner until said character would turn around to face their doom. In It Follows, the monster is literally an STD, which means if a character were to accept their fate and just die without spreading said STD (this STD causes a monster only you can see to follow and kill you, by the way), it would be stoppable- but that's not realistic- we all know human nature and mindless indulgence gets to the characters in the movie which means no one is willing to make the noble sacrifice which means people will continue to die, so on and so forth. Overall, modern horror's lack of compelling villains as well as tropes that are used countless times without putting much new spin on them seem to have dug the genre into a hole- for the time being.

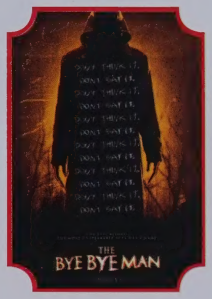
Examples of "Bad" Modern Horror Movies

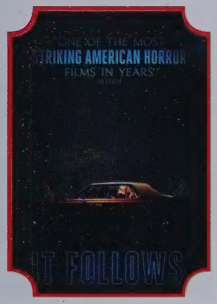
& Their Respective Sins

(Note: This doesn't mean this movie is actually bad! It's all a matter of opinion- these are just common points critics brought up that they believe take away from the horror experience.

1- THE BYE BYE MAN

The Bye Bye Man has an unconvincing, uncompelling and overpowered villain who barely even appears in the movie named after him. He is nigh unstoppable- if you so much as think about him, you are guaranteed to die. There's no escape, and it's sort of a giveaway from the beginning of the movie that survivors are unlikely. Not really much to spoil if it's obvious.





2- IT FOLLOWS

It Follows introduces an interesting concept that also serves as a secret lesson to take away from the movie- the monster is sexually transmitted, and therefore the only way to stop it is noble sacrifice, and, cheesily, abstinence. As good as it looks on paper, critics note the trope becomes severely outplayed and boring after a couple of instances of the same thing happening over and over- they fail to stop the monster and it continues to walk toward them.

3- BLAIR WITCH 3

Blair Witch 3, unfortunately, did not pull a Shrek 2-esque escapade where a third or second movie was somehow better than the original. The sequel feels like an uninspiring spinoff with, again, an undefeatable all-powerful villain. The entire film is spent waiting for every last character to get picked off- escape is futile, and if someome so much as looks at the witch, they're dead meat.

A Thorough Taxonomy of Shapes

written by
ELYSSA HUFF
designed by Thomas Hill

Recently, a scientific endeavor has been taking place.

It all started on a sunny day in Foster Park, when an afternoon of casual hammocking led to something greater. Two friends and I were discussing the value of shapes, which inevitably segued, as it should, into a discussion of shapes and their personalities.

My friends spent the day laughing in this lighthearted exercise (waste) of our time. I, however, couldn't stop thinking about it, and devoted the next several weeks to creating a definitive catalogue of shapes and the vibes they exude.

My Linnaean efforts have led to this point, so take a deep breath while I present shapes and their personalities. Gone are the days of the archaic Zodiac signs indicating personality type—now, it's shape type. Of course, a major disclaimer must come with all of this: these are entirely based on my whims and what they would appear to be in my mind. None of this is, in fact, scientific in any sense (yet, at least). Regardless, I hope you enjoy, and I'm glad that this will be my lasting legacy on the Spartana staff.

SQUARES

As hard as I'm trying to be objective here, I have to make a confession: Squares are the worst. They are objectively the worst shape, so it's entirely reasonable that they would have the worst personality. They feel hate for other shapes and are always willing to put others down. They are rude and unscrupulous, bullying others for their own benefit. Squares are square nationalists and believe themselves to be above all other shapes, despite having no character traits outside of being mean. As such, they are the worst shapes for personality.

RECT ANGLES

Rectangles are squares-lite. They are friends with squares and often partake in the put-downs, but they are fundamentally good shapes. They would be the types who, after a bullying session, apologize and try to make amends with those who suffered. Does it excuse their inherent support of squares for clout? No. However, their good natures help gain some of that bad karma back.

CIRCLES

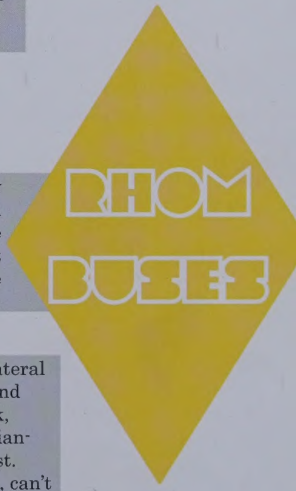
Circles are an interesting case, because they are so boring and yet essential to society as we know it. They are dull and uninteresting, with a very dry personality. They lack any sense of spontaneity and are very predictable. However, they are the foundation for which we are all based on. They are steady and dutiful, willing to do the grunt work that enables more creative shapes to thrive. Because of this, circles play such an important role. Respect.

Ovals are circles, but more interesting. They maintain the same fastidiousness as circles, but with a hint of spice and greater personality. They are strong and unique, having their own interests and passions. While they still serve as an important foundation for other shapes, they come away with more interesting vibes.

Pentagons are underrated and really don't give themselves enough credit. They're very talented but in a muted sort of way that makes few people really pay attention to them. Although they could stand out with ease, they choose instead to sit on the sidelines, providing their input only when absolutely necessary. Pentagons need to do a better job of representing themselves.

Hexagons are the coolest. Well-rounded, with a sort of chill intensity that makes other shapes admire them, they are a great edition to any shape group. They're usually off in their own world, as they're smart in a casual sort of way and don't feel bonded to traditional institutions.

Octagons are haughty, to say the least. They know they're talented and well-rounded, and they aren't scared of showing it. They think of themselves as above other shapes, and it often appears that their pretentiousness alienates them from the other shapes. While they'll probably be really successful shapes, they should probably calm down a bit.



The only way I can do justice to the rhombuses is to say that they give off Kia Soul energy. Specifically, the olive green or black Kia Soul. They are very eclectic, with niche interests that surprise those around them. They're all-around just kind of weird, but in the best way possible. In other words, every shape friend group should have at least one rhombus in the midst.

Triangles are an extremely complex group. On the one hand, you have equilateral triangles, who are literally so cool. They're nonplussed and unproblematic, and well-rounded on top of that. Isosceles triangles are also remarkably laid back, although they have an edginess that is often difficult to pinpoint. Scalene triangles, often thought of as the worst triangles, are interesting, to say the least. They have an extremely chaotic energy that, in the words of Miley Cyrus, can't be tamed, but they're also remarkably whip-smart and quick witted, making them an interesting and spontaneous presence to be around. It would be remiss not to mention an important subsection of triangles: right triangles. There really isn't much to say about them that people don't already know, as they're predictable and lack a strong sense of character. The fact that one shape type can include so many different characters is really incredible and remains a testament to the diverse nature of triangles.

TOADS ON ROADS

written and designed by
CLAIRE ELLIOTT

To drive alone, on a rainy night, will often consolidate the soul. The vibrations of the music bring inner peace while the watery glisten of warm light on the road offers outer sublimity. With these elements combining into a nearly transcendent harmony, we lose ourselves in contentment and bliss.

However, we are not the only creatures who enrich ourselves in the night's rain. Amphibians, a true blend of water and life, appear quite attached to the rain and its aftermath. Moreover, this phenomenon does not go unnoticed. In Ceremony, Leslie Marmon Silko momentarily sheds light on the relationship between the amphibians and precipitation. According to Laguna tradition, frogs are the "rain's children" (-). Their existence provides a sign of relief from the drought, and reveals the hidden beauty and life of nature.

Unfortunately, toads rarely receive the respect they once did. Instead of admiration, we commit vehicular toadslaughter after every rainfall.

"In the past, I have seen toad carcesses on the road, especially on walks around the neighborhood; it is always a sad sight to see how flat they can end up pressed into the ground," Caty Curlin said (11).

As evinced in the popular game Frogger, amphibians encounter true peril on the roads. In fact, an experiment run by Hels and Buchwald in 2001 predicted the true proportion of the toad mortality rate on secondary roads to be between .34 and .61. On freeways, this proportion jumps to .89 to .98. That is equivalent to us placing our lives in the odds of winning the highest level of Frogger.

You may criticize these creatures for being out on the roads, claiming it is their fault; that their stupidity led them to this dangerous state. However, unlike humans, toads are not cursed with what we call "rules;" at least not what we consider rules. They spend their days following their desires. Whereas this is so often reckless for us, it is essential to the life of the toad. When the rain floods worms out of the earth, the toads excitedly hop to the roads, prepared to devour. Without this instinct, they would likely starve: toads need moisture to be out and about. Under the heat of the summer sun, they cannot search for grub as well as they could in the rain.

Furthermore, the toads must simply enjoy the atmosphere after a rainfall. The air hugging the skin, the earth replenished, calm and alive. It is the environment meant for a toad. The balance between humidity and coolness allows their amphibian skin to absorb water comfortably and hunt insects successfully.

There, of course, is a third reason that toads emerge. A reason that fully conflicts with the previously mentioned "rules" of humans: mating. From May to July, toads judiciously bring more toads into the world. It appears the toads have ultimately concluded that rainy nights are the best setting for such activities. Ironically, toads seem to be more mindful than us. We procreate all year, while they designate specific times.

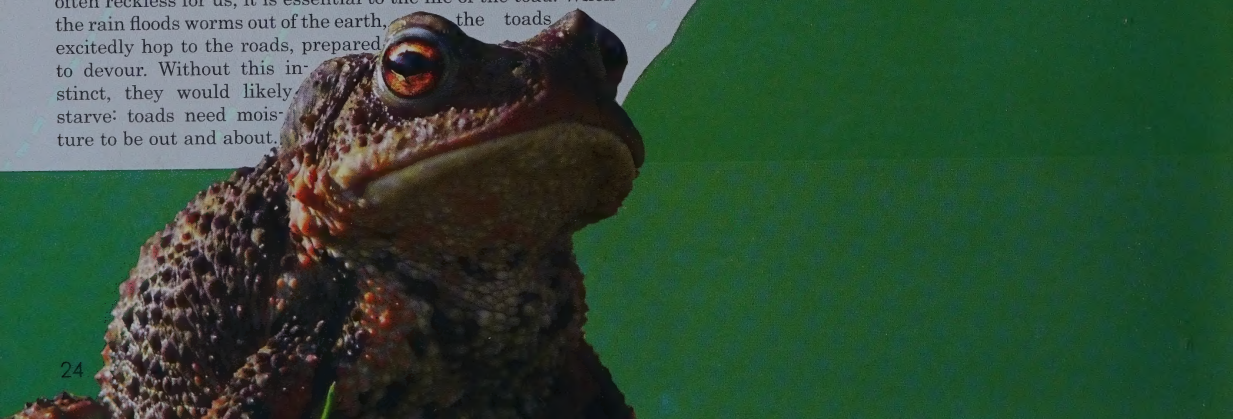
So, they follow Nature's path and rot dead on ours.

However, this amphibian carnage is corrigible; all it takes is a slight turn of the wheel. Literally. According to scientists Marc J. Mazerolle, Matthieu Huot and Marielle Gravel, amphibians (such as the spring peeper, American toad, wood frog, green frog and various salamanders) all remained immobile in response to vehicle stimuli. In fact, of the 2767 amphibians tested, 82% were passive. A toad in the headlights, if you will. Thus, simply avoiding the creature, is the safest option.

Granted, spotting a toad can be a difficult task, as they are masters of disguise.

"After the rain, I do see toads on the road. I think they're leaves and then they jump, so I can tell they're toads," Selah Kolpien (10) said.

Moreover, in wooded areas, leaves and toads are in multitudes. To crush a



toad, then, is one of the most frequent of roadkills. While it is often unavoidable, simple precautions can prevent this toadslaughter. Just rotating the wheel of the car just a few degrees upon seeing a toad-like figure can decrease the toad mortality rate.

This act may seem foolish; an unnecessary and even worthless task. It may be. Nevertheless, I remind you that there is no consequence to avoiding a leaf. In fact, the slight movement of the car is almost imperceptible. The death of a toad, however, leaves our world with one less unsullied life. For, beneath the dirt and the muck on the toad's skin is an innocent creature uncable of evil.

The Ultimate J List

written and designed by
JUNE HILL

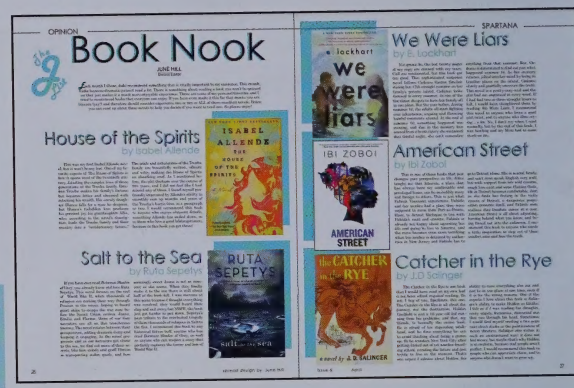
It is the end of an era. Since February of 2019, I have managed to produce a J List for nearly every single issue of the Spartana. This column has allowed me to write freely about whatever I had been obsessing over each month. From music recommendations to ranking peanut butter brands, I have covered a LOT of topics. This being the last Spartana of the year, and quite possibly the last J List ever printed, I thought I would use this month's column as an opportunity to reflect on how The J List has grown over the years, and highlight some of my favorite installments in this series.

Surprisingly, a lot of my favorites were from 2019, in the early days of this column. Then most of 2020 was spent in lockdown and I was not feeling the most inspired while writing J List columns, but 2021 has had some favorites.

It has been a lot of fun writing The J List for you and I hope you enjoy this last column!

February 2019

The very first J List was meant to be a teenager's interpretation of Oprah's O list, and I think I did a pretty good job. Although the page is a bit crowded, I am still impressed by my burgeoning design skills, and the products I chose to feature were fun and out of the ordinary. I remember being so nervous that people wouldn't like the column but it felt so good getting positive feedback for the first time. I felt so proud!



April 2019

The Book Nook edition! I remember having a lot of fun with this one. I still absolutely adore all of these books, except maybe The Catcher in the Rye. I can not remember if I put that in there because I actually liked it or if I was just being a pretentious little sophomore. But, seriously, you should go check out these books if you need something new to read.

August 2019

This one was a heartbreaker! I somehow managed to export it too large so when it printed you could only see the left hand page. I was so proud of this theme and it was perfect for back to school, and look at how well laid out everything is! But I totally messed it up in the export process. Oh well, at least it is making it into the Spartana now!

November 2019

Honestly? This one is iconic. I loved watching trashy sitcom episodes for this column. I had to eliminate a bunch of episodes because I could not have possibly fit them all on the page! It was a lot of fun designing it too. The vertical layout as well as the fonts and the colors work so perfectly on the page. Also, Thanksgiving is the best. Thanksgiving TV is even better!

March 2021

Okay, this is my favorite J List ever. Peanut butter was so fun to write about! It was an excuse to buy entirely too much of it and then bake entirely too many peanut buttery things. I figured out how to make all the graphics too, which was fun and artsy.

February 2020

Wow February of 2020, a month before disaster. Luckily, I had the chance to explore some Chicago schools before the world ended. In this J list, I shared some college visit tips that no one would get to use for another year, but I like the look of this spread anyway.

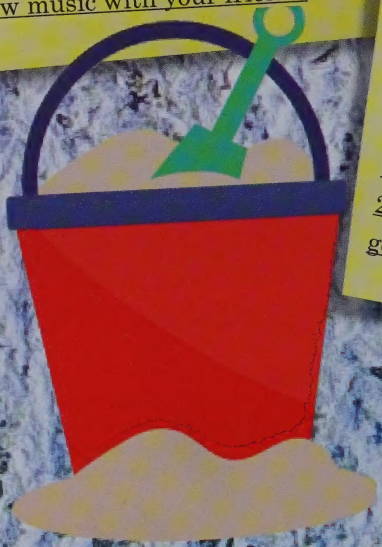
February 2021

This column was inspired by quarantine when my family was doing our best to support local restaurants. We had a lot of favorites and I decided to share mine in this February J List. This one is a favorite because I still love these restaurants and now I really want to order food.

SUMMER

written and designed by
KAIYA CRONKHITE

1. Go Swimming (Obviously)
2. Open your eyes underwater
3. Go on a picnic
4. Go exploring
5. Pull an all-nighter
6. Learn how to make a flower crown
7. Start a summer-long project with your frien
8. Learn a new skill every few days
9. Do nothing (sometimes it's one of those day
10. Make muffins (10/10 recommended)
11. Wash your pet (If it will let you anyway)
12. Rate new music with your friends



13. Find/make a tour of Fort Wayne
14. Visit the Botanical Gardens downtown
15. Do a scavenger hunt in Ft Wayne
16. Visit Lakeside Park and Rose garden
17. Go to science central
18. Volunteer at an animal shelter
19. Watch a movie at the Auburn Drive-in
20. Go Geocache
21. Rearrange your room/house
22. Go people-watching (NOT CREEPILY)
23. Watch a movie at the Regal Cinema (The one with the reclining comfy seats)
24. Dress up super fancy with your friends and go somewhere casual

BUCKETS

25. Go on a road trip with your friends
26. Make a tie-dye shirt
27. Go check out the brookside mansion (It's a coo
spot for a photo shoot or for artistic inspiration)
28. Go 24 hrs without Internet, Radio, and/or TV
29. Drink water PLEASE
30. Do random acts of kindness
31. Have a BBQ contest
32. Go to every restaurant and rate who has the best
fries, nuggets, etc.
33. Bonfire with friends
34. Be bold and confident
35. Escape rooms
36. Sleep under the stars/go stargazing

37. Go-Kart Racing
38. Watch the sunrise/sunset
39. Fort Wayne foods tour
40. Spectrum VR arcade
41. Create a cool hangout spot
42. Compete in a food-eating contest
43. Fight your friends at the Ball Hive
44. Go to Rocket Fizz with your friends
45. Go to Crazy pins
46. Go to Painting fun spot with your friends
47. Camelot Carriage Rides
48. Make Popsicles
49. Take Photo Booth Pictures
50. Make a cake with your friends

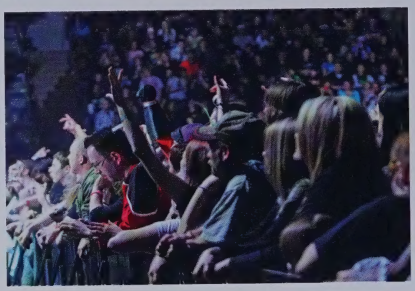
LOST TO COVID

Obituaries for all our favorite activities we've lost during the pandemic

written and designed by
JULIA EPLING

CONCERTS

When COVID-19 began in the spring of 2020, concerts and ongoing tours were cancelled abruptly. According to Pollstar, the concert industry, lost $9.7 billion in ticket sales alone, and $30 billion in sponsorships, concessions, merchandise, and other ancillary factors. Luckily, with vaccinations rolling out, should start back up again, but won't go back to normal immediately.



MOVIE THEATERS

Similar to concerts, movie theaters closed quickly after COVID started. With the closings, many movies that were scheduled to be released in theaters were instead streamed on platforms such as HBO Max and Disney+. While movies were closed, the global box office dropped by billions of dollars, with many theaters still closed internationally. Fort Wayne's AMC theater in Jefferson Pointe opened last summer, and is playing new and old movies. While there are new seat capacity limits and social distancing involved, anyone can go enjoy a movie!

VISITING THE ELDERLY

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we've been told that older people are one the most at risk groups for COVID. This stopped many from seeing their grandparents and other elderly family members. In the best case scenario, some visited the elderly outside, with masks, seated 6 feet apart.

HUGGING

We can no longer greet each other with hugs or handshakes. Instead, elbow bumps are the traditional pandemic greeting. In order to stop the spread, many had to avoid close contact with their friends. Luckily, with vaccinations becoming more common, hugs will start to be seen again. Similar to hugs, many forms of PDA haven't been able to happen since the beginning of the pandemic.

OLD ROUTINES

Goodbye to all of our old routines, we miss them. For some, they haven't gone to school since March 2020. This means they've been adjusting to attending Zoom meetings almost everyday, which is also still common for a lot of workers nationwide. Our old routines also included celebrating holidays a lot differently than the past year. Thanksgiving, for example, did not include meeting with extended family for a lot of people. The same goes for Christmas, Easter, and even Halloween.

SMILING

While we still can find joy in the little things in life, we have lost smiling from COVID because of our masks. Walking down the hallways, sitting in class and even going down the street, masks prohibit us from seeing everyone's emotions. I think everyone can agree that it's hard to tell how someone else is feeling when you can only see their facial expression from their eyes up.

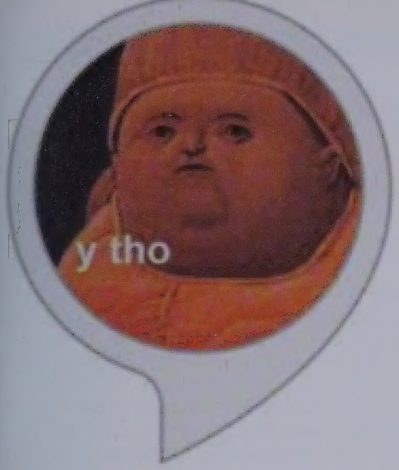
RIP
RIP
RIP
RIP
RIP
RIP
RIP
RIP

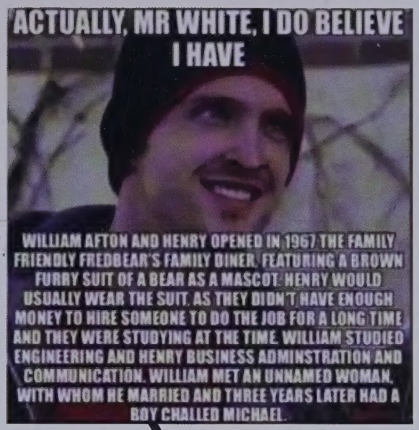
Memeology

written and designed by
WELDON RODOCKER

Toward the end of 2010, memes were just on the come-up, only appearing when people would make them and show their buddies. Fast forward nearly a decade, and now memes are one of the biggest parts of human culture. The difference in what people think is funny now is the memes now are no longer as simple. Memes now feature more ironic meanings. Many people that look at these funny online pictures and videos and can immediately see the irony because it's the 53rd Among us meme they have seen in the last day, but there will always be people that don't see the irony. Meme pages on instagram are one of the greatest spreaders of memes but there is one growing problem with them. Ads now riddle my instagram feed as it feels like I see more ads than memes. And the sad part is they aren't even unique ads. If i would scroll on instagram for 30 minutes i would probably see the same ad 5-10 times.The reasoning behind the constant posting of ads is because people can pay low prices for an advertisement that 75,000+ people will see. Some of these ads run as low as 30 dollars a post. And they are rarely high quality ads as well. It is important to keep in mind that most people that run these pages are teenagers or early 20s so whenever they have a chance to make some money that easily, they will jump on it.

The life and death of a meme tends to always follow the same blueprint with a few outliers. Typically it starts off strong with a small set audience thinking it's funny. As it grows in popularity it then becomes more and more recognizable. This is the downfall of a meme because there is an equation for popularity. The more people that think it's funny the faster it will become unfunny. Many people have a hard time knowing when to let a meme die and they proceed to drive it right into the ground. It can be an embarrassing mistake because then you fall into the cringe category. Once that happens, a new wave of memes comes where they start posting it ironically. At this point they are more so making fun of people that do not know how to let a joke die. However, by doing this they are becoming part of the problem and keeping it relevant.




ACTUALLY, MR WHITE, I DO BELIEVE I HAVE
WILLIAM AFTON AND HENRY OPENED IN 1967 THE FAMILY FRIENDLY FREDBEAR'S FAMILY DINER, FEATURING A BROWN FURRY SUIT OF A BEAR AS A MASCOT. HENRY WOULD USUALLY WEAR THE SUIT, AS THEY DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO HIRE SOMEONE TO DO THE JOB FOR A LONG TIME, AND THEY WERE STUDYING AT THE TIME. WILLIAM STUDIED ENGINEERING AND HENRY BUSINESS ADMINSTRATION AND COMMUNICATION. WILLIAM MET AN UNNAMED WOMAN, WITH WHOM HE MARRIED AND THREE YEARS LATER HAD A BOY CHALLED MICHAEL.

Weldon's Personal Collection

..and this is not

Billboard

HOT 10

written and designed by
GANGA SUBRAMANIAN

Ever since the fateful day of August 4th, 1958, Billboard has been regularly updating the popular Hot 100 list. It started out as a simple music magazine but as its popularity grew it switched to having an online presence as technology progressed. By taking the number of sales, streams, and airplay into consideration, any song regardless of its genre has a chance of making its way onto the list. It also serves as a way to validate the work that got artists onto the list in the first place and can also give new artists a push into stardom.

For the people who are not music artists or looking to get into the profession, it's also a way to see where the national interest in music lies. And after the rough few years, we've had, I wondered if our music taste has gotten any better as a country. For those as interested in our collective music tastes, I've taken on the responsibility of listening to the first top ten songs on the Hot 100 and ranking them based on how good they are so you don't have to. I know that a lot of us haven't visited the site in a while. Personally, the last time I visited it before this article was when my parents still forced me to use a booster seat in the car.

Here, for your pleasure (or displeasure), here's my top ten ranking of the Billboard Top 10:

LEVITATING.....1

Dua Lipa ft. DaBaby

I'm not sure what Dua Lipa put into this song when she was making it, but it is criminal that a song could be this good. The music is mesmerizing and her vocals are otherworldly. Funnily enough, this song came out in 2020, and yet it has persisted till spring of 2021. It's very impressive that it's lasted this long and even more impressive that I did not cringe at the use of 'sugarboo'.

LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN.....2

Silk Sonic

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Nope, it's Bruno Mars, seemingly returning from his five-year-long hiatus (hopefully for good if we're lucky). It's also Anderson .Paak, another delightful artist. Their voices blend together so well, it's honestly strange that they only just started Silk Sonic. This song is probably going to be a classic in the next few years and I for one am excited for that.

MONTERO (CALL ME BY YOUR NAME).....3

Lil Nas X

There was a time when people thought Lil Nas X would be a one-hit-wonder. This song single-handedly proves that he is much more than that. The music is repetitive enough that it's a good kind of catchy and interesting enough that it never gets boring. For anyone trying to study for their finals but procrastinate too much, I recommend just putting this song on loop. It works wonders.

KISS ME MORE.....4

Doja Cat ft. SZA

This doesn't really have anything to do with the song, but I'd like to take a minute to talk about the cover art of this single. Just... why? What would possess you to make art like this? I can't say that the art didn't singlehandedly influence my decision to put it this low, but I can't say that didn't influence my decision at all. It's all a part of the overall experience. Anyways, the song itself is really solid, Doja Cat has a really good voice and SZA is legendary. It's also super catchy, which is never a bad thing to have in a popular song.

SAVE YOUR TEARS.....5

The Weeknd ft. Ariana Grande

Ariana Grande and The Weeknd honestly make a really good duo. Both of their voices compliment each other pretty well which is sort of a surprise. I don't think I ever expected it to sound as good as it did. It's mainly up so high because I really like The Weeknd's music in general.

RAPSTAR.....6

Polo G

Now I wasn't really sure what to do about this one. I've never heard of this song in my life, although that might be my own ignorance. It was number one when I was looking at it too so I might be offending someone for putting it at number six. It's not as high up as the other ones because it's not really my taste. It feels lackluster, but it's not bad.

PEACHES.....7

Justin Bieber ft. Daniel Caeser and Giveon

Kind of boring; what you would expect from Justin Bieber at this point. Daniel Caesar and Giveon are pretty good in it. I'll give Bieber one thing: it's pretty darn catchy, which is a staple of almost every good song he's ever sung. And honestly what else do you need to make a song successful?

DRIVER'S LICENSE.....8

Olivia Rodrigo

It's a good song, and even better when you realize it's the first one that made her big. It's only this low because I don't understand why this is still on this list when Deja Vu came out and completely outshined it. Go listen to Deja Vu instead! She is genuinely super talented and I can't wait to see what else she comes out with next!

UP.....9

Cardi B

Cardi B is best listened to when not thinking. That's all I have to say.

ASTRONAUT IN THE OCEAN.....10

Masked Wolf

I have to admit: I wrote this article for the singular purpose of talking about this song. Simply put, it is an abomination, and probably comes from the same dark place that Dance Monkey came from. Every time I hear this song I have a physical gut reaction to it, the same one most people get when the default Apple iPhone alarm sounds. The lyrics are completely nonsensical and seem to have zero meaning. What is an astronaut in the ocean? What is he doing there? He's just saying things, there's no connections between the lyrics. What's the meaning? What's the point? This song raises more questions than answers. I'll be having a good day and then this song will start playing. No wonder the artist is from Australia, he's got it all upside down.

FINAL THOUGHTS.....

Me

After listening to these ten songs and making incredibly valuable commentary that was very much needed, I have concluded that my music taste fits about half of the songs that are on the Top 100 list. Better than I thought it would turn out, honestly. I hope that this article has been educational and that you have learned a little bit more about both my and the country's music taste. And although you might not need a booster seat to ride in a car anymore, know that if you're truly at a loss for what music to play, Billboard, sometimes, has your back.

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